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**COMMAND AND CONTROL OF SPECIAL
OPERATIONS FORCES MISSIONS IN THE US
NORTHERN COMMAND AREA OF
RESPONSIBILITY**

by

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March 2005

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**COMMAND AND CONTROL OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES
MISSIONS IN THE US NORTHERN COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY**

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The need for a well thought out, planned, and rehearsed command and control organization to conduct special operations in the US Northern Command Area of Responsibility is vital to success in defending the Homeland. Currently, USNORTHCOM does not have an apportioned or assigned command and control structure for the conduct of special operations. This thesis analyzes three courses of action to fulfill this requirement: use the current USNORTHCOM battle staff command structure including the integration of the Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North; rely on the newly formed US Special Operations Command's Joint Task Force Structures; and establish a Theater Special Operations Command North assigned to USNORTHCOM. Through the conduct of analysis and research this thesis recommends that The Joint Staff direct the reorganization required to establish a Theater Special Operations Command North to exercise command and control of special operations forces conducting operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

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ACRONYM DEFINITIONS

AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
AJFHQ	Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters
AOR	Area of Operation
C2	Command and Control
CA	Civil Affairs
CAO	Civil Affairs Operations
CEB	Commander's Executive Board
CIFG	Combined Intelligence Fusion Group
CM	Consequence Management
COA	Course of Action
COCOM	Combatant Command
COG	Current Operations Group
CONPLAN	Concept Plan
CP	Counter-proliferation
CT	Counterterrorism
CTJTF	Counter-Terrorism Joint Task Force
DA	Direct Action
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DPG	Defense Planning Guidance
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
DOJ	Department of Justice
DWC	Domestic Warning Center
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organizations
GBMD	Ground Based Missile Defense
GCC	Geographic Combatant Commander or Command
GEN	General (US Army abbreviation)
HLD	Homeland Defense
HLS	Homeland Security
HRT	Hostage Rescue Team
ISP	Integrated Survey Plan
IO	Information Operations
IOC	Initially Operational Capable
JCET	Joint Combined Exchange Training
JFCOM	Joint Forces Command
JFMCC	Joint Forces Maritime Component Command
JFSOCC	Joint Force Special Operations Component Command
JISG	Joint Information Superiority Group
JMD	Joint Manning Document
JPG	Joint Planning Group

JSOTF	Joint Special Operations Task Force
JTF	Joint Task Force
JTF-N	Joint Task Force-North formerly known as JTF-6
LFA	Lead Federal Agency
LNO	Liaison Officer
MACA	Military Assistance to Civil Authorities also known as
Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA)	
MACSOG-V	Military Assistance Command Special Operations Group-
Vietnam	
MFP	Major Force Program
MG	Major General
NEO	Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations
NSSE	National Special Security Event
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
ONE	Operation NOBLE EAGLE
OPG	Operations Planning Group
OPT	Operations Planning Team
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
SJFHQ-N	Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North
SMEs	Subject Matter Experts
SO	Special Operations
SOC-K	Special Operations Command-Korea
SOC SOUTH	Special Operations Command South
SOD	Special Operations Division
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOLIC	Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict
SR	Special Reconnaissance
SWAT	Special Tactics and Weapons Teams
TACON	Tactical Control
TDA	Table of Distribution Allowances
TSC	Theater Security Cooperation
TSOC	Theater Special Operations Command
UCP	Unified Command Plan
USAF	US Air Force
USA	US Army
USASOC	US Army Special Operations Command
USCG	US Coast Guard
USN	US Navy
USNORTHCOM	US Northern Command
USSOCOM	US Special Operations Command
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WOT	War on Terror

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I. INTRODUCTION

Special Operations Forces are a critical component of United States Northern Command's mission. However, unless significant changes are made to the manner in which US Northern Command is structured, the capabilities of Special Operations Forces may not be used to their full potential when they are most needed. This paper argues that US Northern Command should reorganize to provide better control of Special Operations missions in the US Northern Command Area of Responsibility.

US Northern Command was established as a Geographic Combatant Commander in October 2002 with the dual mission of defending the United States from aggression and providing support to civil authorities in times of crisis and disaster. In order to defend the Homeland in the most effective manner, the primary focus is on defeating attacks of aggression prior to terrorist attacks being realized in the United States. The only means of successfully defeating these attacks prior to their import into the homeland is to win the "away game." The most adept force to conduct counter-terrorism operations of this nature are United States Special Operations Forces (SOF). Command and control of SOF requires an in-depth knowledge of the capabilities and weaknesses of these forces which can only be affected by a structure of command with this knowledge, a Special Operations-capable command. US Northern Command, in its current configuration, lacks a Special Operations Command capability. In order for US Northern Command to have the highest probability of success in the execution of Special Operations, it is imperative that a Special Operations capable command be established to provide the Commander, US Northern Command the option to control Special Operations in the US Northern Command area of responsibility (AOR).

This paper will explore the most probable courses of action available for the Commander, US Northern Command to command and control Special Operations in the US Northern Command AOR.

Currently (2005), US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) does not have a command element with the organic capability to command and control SOF assigned or apportioned to the command. USNORTHCOM has commanders and staffs capable of

executing command and control in a conventional operation, but the capability to command and control Special Operations (SO) does not currently exist in the USNORTHCOM span of control. In order for USNORTHCOM to realize this capability, changes in the training and organization of the current USNORTHCOM battle staff configuration must be made. The most efficient and effective means of command and control of a SO mission is through the establishment of a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) to control the operation and report directly to Commander, USNORTHCOM.¹ To establish this JSOTF in a timely manner and for the commander of the JSOTF to understand the requirements and uniqueness of USNORTHCOM, USNORTHCOM requires an organic Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC). To create an environment where the probability of success is highest for the execution of the mission Joint Publication 3-05 states that Special Operations Forces should command and control SO. A clear and concise chain of command and control of SOF in the execution of SO is critical. The established command and control must be responsive and conducted by a Special Operations command and control element.²

A. HOMELAND DEFENSE VIGNETTE

In order to illustrate the significance of the requirement for USNORTHCOM to develop and maintain a capability to command and control Special Operations, the following vignette is provided:

Department of Homeland Security has elevated the threat level to “Orange,” due to intelligence received that Al Qaeda has planned an attack against the West Coast of the United States. Additional information is leading to indications that the attack may be conducted using a nuclear device.

An emergency distress signal has just been received from the captain of a Princess Lines Cruise Ship which is due to dock in Los Angeles the day after tomorrow. The message claims that the ship is being taken over by terrorist and passengers are being systematically killed. Further attempts by the US Coast Guard to hail the ship have resulted in no response.

¹ JSOTF is a joint task force which is composed of special operations forces from more than one service. This task force is formed to carry out a specific special operation or in support of a larger campaign. Joint Pub 1-02, 12 April 2003, p. 288.

² US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Joint Doctrine for Special Operations*, 17 December 2003.

The President of the United States declares this to be a matter of Homeland Defense which designates the Department of Defense as the lead federal agency to confront the crisis. The Secretary of Defense directs that US Northern Command be the supported command for executing the mission to deal with the situation.

US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) designates the Joint Forces Maritime Component Command (JFMCC) as the supported commander to conduct operations. The Commander, JFMCC assesses the situation and submits his estimate of the situation to USNORTHCOM. The Commander, JFMCC identifies that his forces do not possess the capability to handle a hostage situation (nor do his forces possess the capability to address a possible nuclear device) like the one that has developed off the coast of Los Angeles. He requests the capability to conduct a hostage rescue of the passengers and crew aboard the cruise ship. Commander, USNORTHCOM approves the request and submits it to the Joint Staff for approval and tasking to US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). The request is approved by The Joint Staff and USSOCOM issues orders to the Naval Special Warfare Group to deploy forces to the area in support of USNORTHCOM.

USNORTHCOM continues to monitor the situation and provide information and intelligence to the forces that are enroute to the crisis site. The USNORTHCOM Commander must designate a command element for this Special Operations Force (SOF).

What organization in the USNORTHCOM has the understanding and capability to command a Special Operation of this nature?

B. IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

What is the most effective means for USNORTHCOM to execute the command and control of SO in the USNORTHCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR)? Currently, USNORTHCOM does not have an organic or apportioned³ command capability to fulfill this requirement. Three options exist for Commander USNORTHCOM: 1) crisis Special Operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR will be commanded by the Secretary of Defense and non-crisis SO will be commanded by USNORTHCOM Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters (AJFHQ); 2) establish a Theater Special Operations Command as a sub-unified command organic to USNORTHCOM; or 3) USSOCOM will provide a JTF to execute missions both crisis and non-crisis SO to support Commander, USNORTHCOM.

³ US Department of Defense Joint Publication 1-02 describes apportionment as being allocated for planning for an operation or contingency.

Analysis of these three options, or courses of action, will help to provide the Commander, USNORTHCOM with the best possible solution to the prosecution of SO within the USNORTHCOM AOR.

The most effective and efficient means for USNORTHCOM to command and control SO being executed in the USNORTHCOM AOR is through an organic TSOC. This TSOC can act as the base element of a JSOTF established to command and control an operation or as the Joint Force Special Operations Component Command (JFSOCC). TSOCs are established to integrate SOF into the Commander's plans and contingency operations. The TSOC Commander is responsible for development of plans and conduct of joint SO in the Geographic Combatant Command's (GCC) AOR. A TSOC also provides the GCC the core element for the establishment of a JSOTF organized to direct SO missions.⁴

An organization that is habitually associated with the day-to-day operation of USNORTHCOM, such as a TSOC, has a higher understanding of the intricacies of the situation and requires less of a build-up preparation prior to execution of SO missions in the USNORTHCOM AOR. The time required to "ramp up" an organization external to the daily life of USNORTHCOM can be critical. Time is one of the most valuable assets and should be managed and coveted during a crisis situation. If the JSOTF is formed and deployed from another organization, such as USSOCOM, this does not afford the Commander, USNORTHCOM the most efficient means of executing the mission.

The creation of a JSOTF deployed from USSOCOM in support of a USNORTHCOM SO would provide the Commander, USNORTHCOM with the SO expertise required to execute a SO mission. However, this force is not apportioned to USNORTHCOM. The time required to develop situational awareness of the common operating picture of USNORTHCOM and the AOR can become a severe drain on the availability of the time to execute the operation.

If the previous two options do not exist or are not implemented, USNORTHCOM will command and control SO missions in the AOR through the AJFHQ. This

⁴ US Department of Defense. USSOCOM, Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), available at USSOCOM classified website, http://intel.socom.smil.mil/sojic/mcs/theater_soccs/theater_soccs.htm, accessed March 2004.

organization consists of representatives from each of the USNORTHCOM directorates, operations, intelligence, logistics, etc., in each of its groups. There are currently six components of the Battle Staff which are established at the direction of the Commander. They are the Commander's Executive Board (CEB), Domestic Warning Center (DWC), Current Operations Group (COG), Operations Planning Group (OPG), Joint Planning Group (JPG) and Combined Intelligence Fusion Group (CIFG).⁵ A further explanation and description of these Groups will be discussed later in the paper.

Returning to the vignette, Special Operations Forces are the only element in the US arsenal of capabilities that possess the training and experience to execute a hostage rescue at sea. They are also the only element that has the capability to handle an improvised nuclear device. Addressing one more complication to the scenario discussed above, US SOF are the only element that can conduct this operation at sea while the ship is underway and the enemy forces on the ship are likely to attempt to repel the attacking rescuers. Several elements within the US vast array of capabilities maintain and train to a capability to handle hostage situations to include many local police forces. These elements, while extremely capable for what they are trained and equipped to execute, cannot execute and handle a mission of this complexity and magnitude. The US Coast Guard (USCG) possesses the capability to board a ship and search it. USCG boarding teams can also handle an unruly ship's crew but, they are not trained and equipped to handle a ship's crew who will fight back and do all they can to prevent the boarding of the would-be rescuers.

Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, describes Special Operations as, "special operations conducted in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas to achieve military, diplomatic, informational and/or economic objectives employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement." The difference between SO and conventional operations is measured by the degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques required, how they are employed, the independence from friendly support, operational intelligence, or

⁵ US Department of Defense. LTC Ross Brown, USNORTHCOM J33. "USNORTHCOM Battle Staff and Crisis Action Process," briefing, Mar 2004.

indigenous assistance contained within the operation.⁶ A rescue mission of this magnitude can only be categorized as an SO and only executed by SO-capable forces, SOF.

US SOF are specially trained and equipped to handle just such a mission. Not only are they the best trained and equipped force in the world to execute a hostage rescue, they are the only force in the US arsenal which can execute the mission with the highest probability of success, especially at sea. SOF are a unique force in the total US arsenal, not just the military. Roger Pezzelle describes the Special Operator as unique and states that not every good infantryman can become a good Special Operator. The psychological aspect of Special Operators is what makes SOF different. Existing and operating for extended periods of time in a denied area with indigenous forces and little or no support from the US military requires a unique psychological makeup. Missions that are on the edge of human endurance and capability are the norm for Special Operators.⁷

The importance of the establishment of a separate Special Operations capable command is emphasized by Edward Luttwak, Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, in his discussions of former Chief, Special Operations Division, J3 (Operations), The Joint Staff, Colonel Roger Pezzelle's book, "Military Capabilities and Special Operations in the 1980s." Luttwak states, "When bureaucratic and engineering oriented military establishments (conventional force staffs) attempt commando operations, it is always 'unlucky.' These organizations spend precious time establishing feasibility studies and planning committees. Time that established commando units aware of capability and weakness are inherently aware of."⁸

In a scenario such as the one described in the vignette the force of choice would most likely be SOF because the President and Secretary of Defense want to have the highest probability of success in the execution of this sort of operation and in preventing

⁶ US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, 17 December 2003, I-1.

⁷ Roger M. Pezzelle. "Military Capabilities and Special Operations in the 1980s." edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz. *Special Operations in the US Strategy*. National Defense University Press, 1984, 148.

⁸ Edward N. Luttwak. Discussion of "Military Capabilities and Special Operations in the 1980s" by Roger Pezzelle, edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Trevor, and Richard Shultz. *Special Operations in US Strategy*. National Defense University Press, 1984, 155.

the terrorists from being able to be successful in their mission to kill Americans. The National Security Council and the President, after declaring the situation an HLD situation could choose to have the conventional Navy engage the ship with conventional munitions either sinking or disabling the ship. But what of the hostages and the implications of sacrificing hundreds of innocent lives unnecessarily. SOF's unique ability to conduct surgical strikes, minimizing the chance of collateral damage, are the only force of choice for this type of mission.

C. BACKGROUND

1. Desert One

During November 1979, radical Muslims overthrew the moderate government of Iran, which had replaced the regime of the Shah in January, 1979. Shortly after the coup, a group of Iranian University students attacked the US Embassy in Tehran, capturing 66 Americans and holding them hostage in the Embassy. A few days prior to the takeover of the Embassy by the Iranian terrorists, a secret counter-terrorism organization, code named Delta Force, had just completed an exercise and was deemed "operationally ready". The US Government immediately identified the unit as a possible solution to the hostage situation, if it could not be resolved diplomatically. In April 1980, five months after the hostages had been taken, President Jimmy Carter directed a rescue attempt of the US hostages being held by terrorists in the US Embassy in Tehran, Iran.⁹

Each component of the operation-ground, air and sea-planned and rehearsed their portions separately. This lack of cross-service coordination was later identified as one of the major reasons the operation was unsuccessful. A key element of the operation was to establish a remote landing strip in the desert. This landing strip was essential to the success of the operation because the range of the helicopters used did not allow them to fly the entire mission without refueling. The name of the rendezvous and refueling site was Desert One. The site was critical, not only for the refueling that the helicopters required, but because this was where all the components of the operation would assemble for the mission. The organizations established for the mission were a sampling of the US Military's elite forces. Delta Force, the ground assault element, belonged to the Army.

⁹ Charles G. Cogan. "Desert One and Its Disorders." *The Journal of Military History* 63, issue 1, (January 2003), 201.

The EC-130 aircraft belonged to the Air Force and were responsible for refueling and transporting Delta Force. The Navy provided the helicopters while the marines provided the pilots. The Navy was concerned about the lack experience its pilots had flying long distances over land. To complicate this issue, the helicopters the Marines flew normally were an older model than what the Navy would provide.¹⁰

Before the operation could begin, complications leading to the eventual calling off of the mission began to mount. The operation began with two less aircraft than required. About 200 miles after launch from the Nimitz, one of the 53s had a hydraulic warning indicator light illuminate, and the pilot aborted his mission. Later, during transit through a dust storm, another 53 encountered problems with its navigational system and aborted. Six of the eight 53s arrived at Desert One and the window of opportunity for execution was closing. COL Beckwith, the Delta Force Commander, pressed to continue the mission. As the Delta Force troops were loading the aircraft, another hydraulic indicator warning light illuminated on another 53. Col Edward Sieffert, USAF, the air component commander, deemed the situation too dangerous due to the lack helicopters. The request to call off the mission was made and passed to the President. The President approved the request and evacuation of Desert One began.

However, the 53s still required refueling prior to departure from Desert One. As one of them was being refueled, its rotor struck an EC-130, which ignited the fuel and caused an explosion. Eight of the would-be rescuers were killed and the helicopter was destroyed. The dead and the helicopters were left behind at Desert One. Operation EAGLE CLAW, or, as it became known in the common vernacular, Desert One, was a failure.¹¹

The problems with interoperability did not begin at Desert One. An air of competitiveness between the services had developed over the preceding decade. The parochialism which had developed since the end of the Vietnam War between the conventional and unconventional forces had created an atmosphere of mistrust and

¹⁰ Charles G. Cogan. "Desert One and Its Disorders." *The Journal of Military History*. Lexington: January 2003, 201.

¹¹ Charles G. Cogan. "Desert One and Its Disorders." *The Journal of Military History*. Lexington: January 2003, 201.

misunderstanding of unconventional forces and operations by conventional force officers. In addition to this environment in the services, Washington had created a hesitant and unsure decision making environment. Washington was not comfortable with the rescue operation and this less than total commitment transferred to the planners and the commanders of the operation.¹² A command environment which lacked confidence in the success of the operation brewed failure and the search for excuses to quit around every corner.

Desert One was a watershed event for the US Military. The lack of cross service coordination had caused a critical failure in the mission. The mission failure and subsequent accident highlighted a major split in the way the military had been planning and conducting operations. There were minimal joint operations being conducted by the military, and Desert One demonstrated the problems that the lack of cross-service coordination and interoperability can cause. The failure, especially in the world of Special Operations, was the impetus for of the Joint Military requirement and identified the need to create a command that would ensure inter service operability and readiness for Special Operations.

2. Holloway Commission

Following the aborted mission at Desert One and the loss of life, Congress directed an investigation into the mission and what caused the failure. This investigation became known as the Holloway Commission, named after the Chairman, Admiral J. L. Holloway, III, USN (Ret). The investigation was called the Special Operations Review Group, and they published their findings in Rescue Mission Report and presented the report to Congress. The investigation found that although adequate planning existed, it did not include additional helicopters nor account for bad weather in the plan. The report also determined that preparation was adequate but lacked a full mission profile rehearsal.¹³ If the rehearsal had been conducted it is likely the weak links in the chain of

¹² Charles G. Cogan. "Desert One and Its Disorders." *The Journal of Military History*. Lexington: January 2003, 201.

¹³ A full mission profile rehearsal is a training exercise in which all the elements that will execute the mission, rehearse the entire operation from beginning to end with all the equipment to be used and in the environment and setting in which the mission will be executed. This type of rehearsal is normally completed immediately prior to mission execution and allows all the forces to "iron out" the last minute details of the operation prior to its execution.

command would have been identified. The report specifically states that command and control above the Joint Task Force (JTF) or the “upper echelons” was excellent. However, at the JTF and below, the chain of command was not as clear and became especially muddled on the issue of who was really in charge. The relationships were tenuous and were easily influenced, creating misunderstanding about who could make the mission decision to continue or abort the mission. The conclusion of the report led to the commission’s recommendation that a “Counter-Terrorism Joint Task Force (CTJTF) be established as a field agency of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with permanently assigned personnel and certain assigned forces.”¹⁴ The CTJTF became the first permanently manned and funded Joint Special Operations Unit.

One of the first steps toward effecting the change recommended by the Holloway Commission was the Defense Guidance of 1981. This guidance was the first mention of SOF as a force, and it directed each of the services to develop a Special Operations capability.¹⁵ With the mission failure at Desert One and the resulting findings of the Holloway Commission, Congress became involved in the development and preparation of the military to fight. This involvement would create significant changes in the US Military and the Department of Defense forcing the military to become jointly interoperable and increasing the power and oversight of civilian authority over the Department of Defense. Desert One and the findings of the Holloway Commission were the impetus for Congress to mandate a change in the way the military fights and trains to fight. This forced change was finally implemented in 1986 with the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

3. Goldwater-Nichols Defense Act

The intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was:

- 1) reorganize the Department of Defense and strengthen civilian authority in the Department;

¹⁴ Admiral J. L. Holloway, III, USN (Ret), “Rescue Mission Report.” Statement made by Holloway to US Congress in August 1980.

¹⁵ John O. Marsh, Jr. text of speech. “Special Operations in US Strategy.” Edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz, National Defense University Press, 1984, 18.

- 2) improve the military advice provided to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense;
- 3) place clear responsibility on the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commanders for the accomplishment of the missions assigned to those commands;
- 4) ensure that the authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders for the accomplishment of missions assigned to their commands;
- 5) increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning;
- 6) provide for more efficient use of defense resources;
- 7) improve joint officer management policies; and
- 8) otherwise enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve the management and administration of the Department of Defense.¹⁶

These changes to the Department of Defense forced the US Military to become more “joint” or, as some like to call it, more purple. Each component of the military Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force were required to fill positions on The Joint Staff and the Staffs of the Geographic Combatant Commanders¹⁷ and Specified Command Commanders. These positions were no longer a detriment to an officer’s career. The positions became a requirement for an officer from any service to become a General Officer. The forced integration of personnel on staffs helped to mitigate the parochialism between the services by creating a better informed group of officers who understood the capabilities and shortcomings of the other services. This development of knowledge helped to create more efficient use of the forces. Not only did the act change how personnel were employed, it forced the military to become more compatible. Gone would be the days of the Navy fighter not being able to talk to the Air Force tanker or an Army Division not able to talk to a Marine Battalion. When buying or improving

¹⁶ United States. *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*. 99th Congress, available at <http://www.ndu.edu/library/goldnich/99433pt2.pdf> accessed June 2004.

¹⁷ These Commanders were referred to as Commanders in Chief (CINC) when the Goldwater-Nichols Act was implemented.

existing equipment, the military was now required to ensure that this equipment was compatible with other services' equipment. If the equipment being purchased did not meet the compatibility requirements it risked not being funded by Congress.

Almost immediately after the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reform Act was passed, Senators Nunn and Cohen submitted an amendment to the act in 1987 which called for the establishment of a separate specified command for all US SOF. This change to the military would be even more difficult to establish than the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Mr. Lunger, in an interview conducted by USSOCOM Historian, John Partin stated, "The service chiefs opposed a strong SOF organization because having made war a life long study and having fought to get to the top, they were loathe to admit that their careers and weapons systems were irrelevant to the real world."¹⁸ This command would be responsible for the training and manning of all SOF throughout the US Military. Following 9/11, the command was given the additional responsibility to plan and prepare for and when directed conduct, counter-terrorism operations in support of the War on Terror. The law which established USSOCOM states that all SOF in the United States, active and reserve, are assigned to USSOCOM unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of Defense.¹⁹

4. USSOCOM Organization

The creation of a separate command for the care, training, and development of Special Operations in the US military was a key event for SOF. In the past, SOF had been on its own buried in the services as just another branch. USSOCOM provides SOF a voice at the table that did not exist previously. As an example of how dire conditions had been for SOF throughout its history, Sam Sarkesian, Professor of Political Science, Loyola University, points out that during the Korean War, several attempts were made to employ SOF with little or no impact on the operations in which they were employed. According to one individual, who participated in these efforts, "as the organization grew larger and more conventional, the effectiveness of its operations decreased accordingly." Sarkesian also explained that an organization established to conduct low intensity

¹⁸ John Partin. USSOCOM, Memorandum for Record, Interviews on the Origins of USSOCOM, Washington, DC, 6-14 July 1988 (27 July 1988).

¹⁹ US Department of Defense. "United States Special Operations Command History, 15th Anniversary," 16 April 2002, 5.

conflicts (guerilla warfare is a SO mission in this context) cannot be formed ad-hoc because of the training, preparation, and operational implementation required to conduct this type of operation.²⁰ In contrast to SO attempted during the Korean War, Pezzelle explains that the lessons learned from Military Assistance Command Special Operations Group-Vietnam (MACSOG-V) serve as an early example of how SO planning and execution should be conducted for future SO Commands. The tactics, techniques and procedures developed and used are an excellent source for how to conduct SO in a modern war. MACSOG-V also serves as an example of problems that can occur with lack of coordination and integration of mutually supporting assets.²¹ Another example of how important mission support and focus had become was operation URGENT FURY. This operation was conducted to rescue medical students from the island of Grenada in the Caribbean. Analysis of this operation will not be covered in this paper. However, there are some lessons learned that apply to situations that influenced the creation of USSOCOM.

In operation URGENT FURY, SOF were not commanded by SOF for the invasion. During his testimony to Congress, MG (Ret) Richard Scholtes, Commander of the JSOTF for Grenada, explained that the conventional commanders' misuse of SOF during the operation was the key reason for the high casualties suffered by SOF during this operation.²² According to GEN Brian Brown, on several occasions during URGENT FURY, SOF was not properly supported or was misused and improperly employed due to a lack of knowledge of how to employ SOF by the conventional JTF commanders. One example he points out that the Rangers were inserted during daylight. The Rangers continuously train to conduct operations at night. The potential operational advantage gained through countless hours of night training was not realized by the conventional JTF Commander. GEN Brown also said the JSOTF with a lack of authority to command and

²⁰ Sam C. Sarkesian. "Organizational Strategy and Low Intensity Conflict." *Special Operations in US Strategy*, edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz. National Defense University Press, 1984, 265-266.

²¹ Roger M. Pezzelle. "Military Capabilities and Special Operations in the 1980s." *Special Operations in US Strategy*, edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz. National Defense University Press, 1984, 141-142.

²² US Department of Defense. "United States Special Operations Command History, 15th Anniversary," 16 April 2002, 5.

control SOF during the operation severely hurt SOF employment. Because of this lack of a SOF command and control, the parochialism between the services was manifested in battle when the Commander of the US Marine Forces refused to fly the Rangers with Marine helicopters during the operation.²³

The creation of a separate four-star command to provide for the funding, training and preparedness of SOF has helped to mitigate the problems discussed above. USSOCOM has also become an advocate for SOF commanding SOF. As noted above, several operations have either met with failure or higher casualty rates because a clear understanding of SO capabilities did not exist in the chain of command responsible for the operation. A common understanding and knowledge of the capabilities, both strengths and weaknesses, of SOF is critical to the success of a SO mission. Simple things which are common knowledge throughout the SOF community, such as Rangers fighting at night, are not common knowledge throughout the military. Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh stated that emphasis must be placed on “flexibility, on imaginative planning, and on decisive execution. Conventional and Special Operations Commanders must both understand the capabilities and limitations of both types of forces.”²⁴

D. SPECIAL OPERATIONS MISSIONS

SOF, while a highly capable force, have a finite mission set and a select group of parameters that must be met in order to employ SOF in these missions. It is imperative for Commanders to understand these missions and differences between SOF and conventional forces. This familiarity of SOF characteristics and capabilities ensures missions selected are commensurate with their capabilities. In executing these missions, SOF can gain access to denied areas, rapidly deploy to a crisis area, or be used as a means of establishing a diplomatic relationship with foreign governments. SOF accomplishes these missions while executing its core tasks or as a supporting or primary task for the assigned mission. SOF are equipped and organized to conduct nine core tasks: direct action, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare,

²³ Harry S. Brown. “The Command and Control of Special Operations Forces.” Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, December 1996, 40, 47.

²⁴ John O. Marsh. Text of speech, *Special Operations in US Strategy*. edited by Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovvar, Richard Shultz National Defense University Press, 1984, 23.

counterterrorism, psychological operations (PSYOP), civil affairs (CA) operations, counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and information operations (IO).²⁵

A **direct action** (DA) is a short duration offensive action executed in a hostile, denied or politically sensitive environment. DA requires the employment of specially trained forces with the capability to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, or recover assigned targets. A DA mission is differentiated from conventional missions by the level of risk to the force and the strategic impact the outcome of the mission may have. DA missions include raids, ambushes, and direct assaults. These DA specific missions can be accomplished using stand-off attacks such as information operations (IO) or via air, maritime, or ground-based platforms.

Special reconnaissance (SR) includes reconnaissance and surveillance missions conducted in environments described in DA. SR is executed to collect and/or verify information of strategic or operational importance.

Foreign internal defense (FID) is conducted to train a host nation's military force to defeat an insurgent threat, lawlessness or subversion. FID can be conducted beginning at the very basic levels of establishing a military from nothing, to conducting training in a highly complicated and risky mission such as hostage rescue.

Unconventional Warfare (UW) involves all aspects of the SO mission set. UW is the umbrella of operations which SOF were originally created to execute. The UW main effort is Guerrilla Warfare. UW operations are normally conducted over extended periods of time in a non-permissive environment in which the political sensitivities of the operation have strategic implications. The political environment of the host nation is unfriendly to the US and its interests; however, UW cannot be conducted without the support of the indigenous population of the host nation. This support is critical to the success of UW operations, as was demonstrated by SO conducted in Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. SOF deployed, organized, trained and equipped indigenous forces to defeat the controlling Taliban government.

²⁵ US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, 17 December 03, viii.

Counterterrorism (CT) operations are offensive in nature and conducted to prevent, deter, pre-empt and respond to terrorism. The role of SOF is to execute these missions as a supporting task to DOD's overall combating terrorism operations. These operations range from intelligence gathering to offensive actions against terrorists or their supporting efforts as a pre-emptive action to prevent the terrorists from attacking.

Counter-proliferation (CP) of WMD describes operations taken to prevent the spread of WMD, through seizure, destruction, render safe, capture or recovery of WMD. The main effort of CP is to prevent the development of the capability to produce and deliver WMD technology by organizations and rogue nations.

Civil Affairs (CA) operations (CAO) are conducted to provide the host nation with the ability to establish and maintain its own infrastructure. These tasks range from establishing the basic needs of the population such as utilities to providing training in civil governmental authority. The key objective of CAO is to maintain control of the population by "winning the hearts and minds."

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) are conducted to influence the enemy to do the will of the United States without firing a shot. PSYOP can be conducted over a variety of media to include actions or mis-actions of a force to convince the enemy of a capability or strength and ability that may or may not exist. This influence is conducted to change the behavior of the enemy forces and to gain an advantage for the friendly force commander.

Information Operations (IO) are operations conducted to influence the enemy's will to fight. These operations include PSYOP, CAO, computer network operations, electronic warfare, physical attack, operational security and military deception. The intent of IO is to synchronize all these actions into a single theme that supports the commander's overall objectives. IO can be described as an economy of force across the spectrum of the battle space.²⁶

²⁶ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, 17 December 2003, II-4 – II-8.

E. US NORTHERN COMMAND MISSIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, significant changes were directed in US Government to counter and prevent the chances for another terrorist attack. One of the most significant changes the Department of Defense made was the establishment of a Combatant Command whose geographic responsibilities include the US.

USNORTHCOM was established as fully operational capable on 11 September 2003, with the responsibility to protect and defend the homeland. USNORTHCOM's mission states that the Command is responsible for preventing, detecting, deterring, and defending the homeland from attacks. USNORTHCOM's website states:

The command's mission is homeland defense and civil support, specifically:

Conduct operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the United States, its territories, and interests within the assigned area of responsibility; and

As directed by the President or Secretary of Defense, provide military assistance to civil authorities including consequence management operations.

U.S. Northern Command plans, organizes, and executes homeland defense and civil support missions, but has few permanently assigned forces. The command will be assigned forces whenever necessary to execute missions as ordered by the President.²⁷

²⁷ Department of Defense. United States Northern Command website, http://www.northcom.mil/index.cfm?fuseaction=s.who_mission, accessed June 2004.

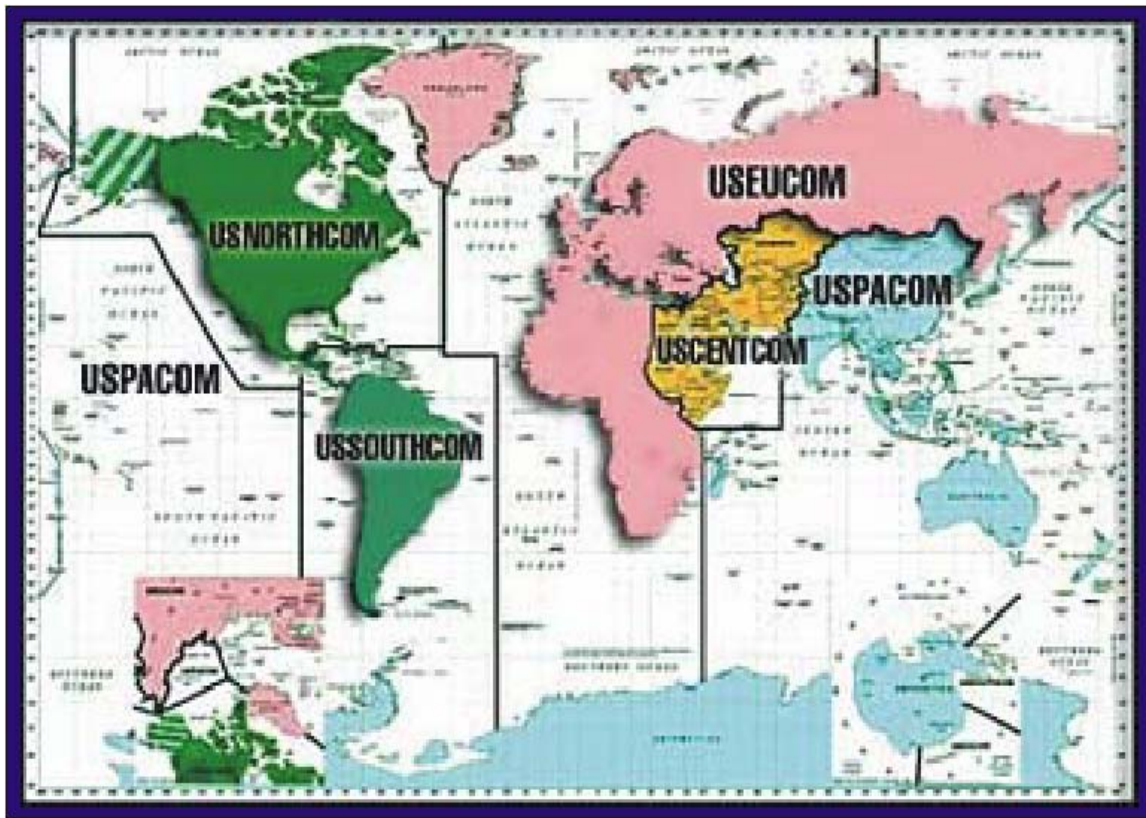


Figure 1. US Combatant Commands' Areas of Responsibility ²⁸

The figure above illustrates the geographic responsibility that each of the GCCs possesses. The Unified Command Plan 2002 established USNORTHCOM and delineated its area of responsibility. This directive created the first-ever Combatant Command responsibility for the United States. Prior to this, military assistance to civil authorities (MACA) was handled by the Services, primarily the Army. As illustrated above, USNORTHCOM's AOR encompasses more than the domestic regions of the US. USNORTHCOM also has responsibility for Mexico, Canada, portions of the Caribbean, and a shared responsibility for Alaska with US Pacific Command.²⁹ The first Commander of USNORTHCOM was Air Force General Ralph E. Eberhart.

²⁸ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security*, Final Coordination, 26 March 2004, II-2.

²⁹ "The Creation of the United States Northern Command: Potential Constitutional, Legal, and Policy Issues Raised by a Unified Command for the Domestic United States", <http://www.constituionproject.org/ls/NorthcomInterim.DOC>, accessed, April 2004.

As a GCC with all the responsibilities of maintaining regional engagement with other nations within the AOR, defending the homeland, and providing assistance to federal authorities in time of need, USNORTHCOM has a uniquely expanded mission to fulfill.

To match USNORTHCOM's unique mission, SOF in support of USNORTHCOM is just as unique. The USNORTHCOM J3 (Operations) Special Operations Division (SOD) has identified five primary SO missions that are conducted in support of USNORTHCOM's mission. They are: direct action, special reconnaissance, combating terrorism, counter-proliferation and unconventional warfare. The current mission of the USNORTHCOM J3 SOD is

USNORTHCOM J32 SOD develops strategies and programs for the integration of Joint SOF capabilities; manages and monitors SOF operations, in support of USNORTHCOM programs and initiatives.³⁰

These missions while not all-encompassing of the SOF core missions as designated by USSOCOM, cover the primary spectrum required for SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

SOF in support of USNORTHCOM is also the lead element for USNORTHCOM's theater security cooperation program. This program involves building relationships between the US Military and that of nations within the USNORTHCOM AOR, primarily Mexico and Canada. These relationships help to foster an air of trust and exchange of capability and training. They also create the ability for mutual support in time of crisis. Areas where this may become a necessary exchange would be the ability of the Canadian Forces to respond more quickly to a situation in an area such as Juneau, AK or the US providing WMD response to either Mexico or Canada.

The importance of the establishment of joint forces and operations, the creation of a separate Special Operations Command and USNORTHCOM, and missions of SOF in general and specifically in support of USNORTHCOM are key points to understand prior to moving to an analysis of command of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR. The

³⁰ Department of Defense. United States Northern Command, Operations Directorate, Special Operations Division mission briefing, 8 June 2004, 3.

command and control of SOF conducting operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR remains an unanswered question. European, Pacific, Central, and Southern Command all maintain an organic TSOC assigned to the command through the Unified Command Plan (UCP). These TSOCs provide the Commander with a SOF-capable command and control element. TSOCs maintain the ability to rapidly deploy and establish a JSOTF to conduct SO in support the Geographic Combatant Commander. Even Joint Forces Command, whose mission is joint experimentation and training, maintains a Special Operations Command.

F. THESIS CONSTRUCT

Before moving further into the analysis of the problem, some assumptions have to be made in order to scale and scope the problem. This paper will not debate the value of SOF commanding SOF, which has been established in Joint Publication doctrine. This will, however, be a determining factor when comparing courses of action for the conclusion. Also, DOD recently analyzed the value of combining USNORTHCOM with USSOUTHCOM possibly creating America's Command (AMERICOM). The outcome of this analysis and any decisions made by the Secretary of Defense to merge or not merge the two commands do not affect the analysis. However, any changes that are made will be discussed for further analysis as part of the conclusion. Another key factor is USSOCOM is presently developing plans to establish deployable JTFs as part of USSOCOM to support the War on Terror. These JTFs will be discussed further during course of action analysis. Equipment availability and costs for any of the courses action will not be considered. The assumption is that equipment is always available with the organization's priority and budget. Personnel to man the organization will be considered.

That the Commander, USNORTHCOM requires the capability to command and control SO is not disputed. What will be analyzed further in this paper is the frequency that a SO command would be utilized, and when such a command is required, what is the best means to provide the Commander with the necessary capability. A key finding will be whether an organic TSOC would provide the Commander, USNORTHCOM with the most effective means of executing Special Operations within the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR). Further research and analysis will explore three courses of action to address C2 of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR:

1) Continue to use the USNORTHCOM adaptive joint headquarters as the primary means of providing command and control of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

2) Establish an organic TSOC in support of USNORTHCOM.

3) Apportion a JTF from USSOCOM with habitual association for training and operations with USNORTHCOM.

Analysis of these courses of action will be based on such as: responsiveness of the command to a crisis situation; continuity of C2; knowledge of the AOR; knowledge and understanding of the unique aspects and sensitivities for military operations conducted in the AOR; SOF ability to operate and integrate operations with various agencies; (the ‘interagency’) and the manpower cost to establish a new organization. Each of these attributes will be defined later in the paper along with a means of quantifying each attribute. If an attribute is difficult to quantify, professional judgment and an objective recommended scoring for each course of action will be established. Thorough analysis of the COAs against these attributes will help to illustrate which of the three COAs will provide the most feasible and effective C2 structure for USNORTHCOM controlling SOF in the AOR.

Each of the COAs will be defined and evaluated individually against each of the defined attributes. After each COA is evaluated individually a comparison of the courses COAs will be presented with a conclusion on the recommended COA to best fulfill the needs of controlling SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A. RESEARCH QUESTION

The United States Military has a longstanding tradition of warfare overseas. Its role in domestic operations has been limited, mainly in the area of support for natural disasters. However, with 9/11 and the increased threat of future terrorist activity on US soil, there has been a marked increase in the collaboration and coordination between state and local law enforcement officials and the Department of Defense (DOD). DOD's response to the threat to Homeland Security, with the objective of supporting and collaborating with state and local agencies, was the establishment of the new combatant command, USNORTHCOM. How the Interagency works together and performs with a command and control structure remains to be seen. However - the key issue is command and control (C2). Nowhere is the issue of command and control more critical than it is within Special Operations Forces (SOF) and their C2 relationship with USNORTHCOM. SOF are a unique resource for USNORTHCOM, and they can be applied to both deter and respond to acts of terrorism. With the role of "military protection of the United States territory, domestic populations, and critical defense infrastructure against external threats and aggressions," SOF are uniquely trained and equipped to respond. But how effective will they be if their C2 is not an established, trained and rehearsed organization with the resident expertise to make time-critical decisions? Lessons learned from the failed hostage rescue attempt during President Carter's administration have left lasting concerns over how best to manage a complex C2 structure. There are conflicting opinions regarding allowing SOF to operate under the current structure of USNORTHCOM with a C2 structure that may or may not be conducive to mission success. While USNORTHCOM has now positioned itself to fully incorporate the unique skills and talents of this community into the command structure, there are still some unanswered questions as to how that should be accomplished, given the preferred method of a "self contained" command and control, distinct and necessary, for a fully functioning Special Operations Force.

B. DISCUSSION

The research for this thesis explored the various SOF C2 arrangements and determined the strengths and weaknesses of each and when each would be appropriate. In conducting the research, the identification of the attributes required for evaluating which SOF C2 structure was a best fit for USNORTHCOM was essential for the establishment of the validity and strength of the recommendation. The attributes selected to conduct these analyses and comparisons were derived from discussion with experts in the field of US SOF operations and organizations. Additionally, some of the attributes are commonly used in the conduct of the military decision making process when comparing courses of action in order to determine which course of action will lead to the desired outcome of the commander.

The methodology of this literature review involved researching academic and doctrinal bodies of work obtained primarily from two general sources:

(1) Doctrinal - SOF-specific periodicals published by the service components of USSOCOM and the US Joint Forces Command, which is responsible for the training and doctrine of joint forces.

(2) Academic - SOF specific periodicals written by SOF-qualified personnel and members of military academia.

On the subject of SOF operations and C2 organizations, specifically - the two categories were mutually, since the academics is based on the doctrine and vice versa. The studies and journal papers are based on doctrine established within military academia. These studies and papers help to present a better understanding of existing doctrine, and establish a forum for changes and improvements to the doctrine. While preparing for this thesis, the difference between these two categories did not present itself as a significant factor affecting the findings of the research.

The review of the literature evolved into the following categories: the theory and doctrine of Special Operations; the theory and doctrine of Homeland Security; America's historical experience with Special Operations and Homeland Security; the spectrum of threats USNORTHCOM can expect to face; and the strategic and political environment in which USNORTHCOM operates.

1. The Theory and Doctrine of Special Operations

Several Joint Publications have been developed over the last ten years focusing on the training, development and employment of SO in support of joint operations and as unilateral SO. The primary theme of the joint doctrine for Special Operations is twofold: SOF should command SOF in both crises and daily operations conducted in support of the US national strategic objectives; and SOF are highly specialized units which must be employed properly. The proper employment of SOF drives joint doctrine to the conclusion of SOF commanding SOF and the importance of the establishment of a SOF chain of command to oversee SO missions. Joint Publication series “3” covers joint operations, which includes SO, ranging from the basics of SOF employment and makeup to the tactics, techniques and procedures of SOF core missions, e.g., Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Unconventional Warfare (UW).

The base document for Joint SO, Joint Publication 3-05, *Joint Doctrine for Special Operations*, establishes the approved doctrinal procedures for Special Operations. This publication is the basis for how to employ SOF unilaterally or in support of a larger campaign or operation. JP 3-05 discusses the nine core missions of SOF outlined earlier. Command and Control of SOF is discussed in depth. This section describes the organizations that are established in the military to provide C2 of SOF in both peacetime and combat operations. It also covers the basics of a TSOC, its responsibilities, and how to employ the TSOC in support of GCC missions.³¹

In his thesis, “The Command and Control of Special Operations Forces,” Harry Brown, presents some insight into the importance of SOF commanding SOF in operations. He cites examples from Operation URGENT FURY in which the lack of understanding of the limitations and capabilities of SOF likely contributed to a higher casualty rate for the SOF units in the operation. Also, the lack of a centralized support structure for SOF during the operation limited the capabilities of SOF and contributed to SOF units attempting to rely on other forces for support. Brown’s thesis relates the importance of SOF to the ultimate success of a mission.³²

³¹ US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. 17 December 2003.

³² Harry Brown. “The Command and Control of Special Operations Forces.” Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, December 1996.

US Navy Commander Sean Pybus provides further evidence for the unique requirements of SOF in the conduct of SO missions in his paper, “National SOF C2: NCA-Direct or Via the CINC?” He states that SOF, because of its narrow mission focus, requires a specific type and quality of intelligence that is not normally present in conventional force operations. The focus of his paper is on C2 of National SOF conducting SO in support of combating terrorism. Pybus concludes that the command structure for this type of short-duration, crisis operation is dependent on the structure of the existing in-theater staff, its experience with the type of operation being conducted and familiarity with the capabilities and limitations of National SOF and the time available to plan and execute the mission in conjunction with other operations that the existing commander has to control. Pybus’ conclusion is that there is no set standard for when the theater command should control National SOF conducting operations and when the command should be retained by the Secretary of Defense. Pybus’ conclusion has some validity, however, in that he states it cannot be established that the command and control structure for an operation will be figured out when the operation happens. The structure required to support such an operation must already be in existence and trained and exercised to a high degree of readiness. If selection or creation of a command and control structure is required every time an operation is considered, the ability for that operation to be conducted in a timely manner is severely hampered.³³

The SO joint doctrine established in the Joint Publications stating SOF should command SOF is a key component supporting the requirement for USNORTHCOM to have a SOF to oversee and command SO conducted in the USNORTHCOM AOR. The specific capabilities of SOF and how they are applied either unilaterally or in support of other joint operations helps to describe the importance of a SO command.

2. The Theory and Doctrine of Homeland Security

Although the process and broad category of Homeland Security (HLS) has existed since the birth of our nation, the focus of HLS as a defined discipline had not been discussed until after the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. The doctrine for military support to HLS continues to be developed. As of this writing, the first joint publication

³³ Sean A. Pybus. “National SOF C2: NCA-Direct or Via the CINC?” Naval War College, Rhode Island, 18 May 1998.

for HLS was still in its final coordination draft and had not been officially released. This publication establishes the doctrine for military operations in support of HLS operations and interagency coordination. This draft publication also presents information and guidance on the preparation of plans to support HLS operations. A key application of the publication is the description of missions, legal authorities and interagency relationships.³⁴

On 11 April 2003, the US Army War College convened a Senior [leader] Symposium consisting of six retired flag and general officers to discuss the role of the Department of Defense, US Northern Command, and the Department of Homeland Security in protecting our nation from attacks. The publication of the symposium's recommendation is contained in a Center for Strategic Leadership article, "DOD, NORTHCOM, and the Department of Homeland Security." The participants of the symposium recommended that USNORTHCOM be encouraged to conduct a Theater Engagement Plan to establish a better working relationship with state and local officials. Another key conclusion was that Homeland Defense and Homeland Security are not departmentally exclusive from each other, and require close coordination between DOD (USNORTHCOM) and the Department of Homeland Security.³⁵

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics commissioned a study by the Defense Science Board on how and what DOD should do to support Homeland Security. The report produced from the study, titled "DOD Roles and Missions in Homeland Security, Volume I," discusses what USNORTHCOM must do to accomplish its directed mission.³⁶

3. America's Historical Experience with Special Operations and Homeland Security

SOF, in concept, have been a part of the American military support of Homeland Security since Roger's Rangers fought in the French and Indian Wars of the 18th

³⁴ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26 *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordination Draft). 26 March 2004, i.

³⁵ Bert B. Tussing and James Kievit. "Collins Center Senior Symposium 'DOD, NORTHCOM and Department of Homeland Security.'" Center for Strategic Leadership, US Army War College. April 2003, vol. 03-03.

³⁶ Department of Defense. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics, Defense Science Board. "DOD Roles and Mission in Homeland Security Summer Study 2003 Volume I." November 2003.

Century. This thesis will utilize some historical examples to demonstrate both the proper and improper employment of SOF. This will include references to the Military Assistance Command Studies and Observations Group-Vietnam (MACSOG-V). MACSOG-V offers a unique look at a command that was not designated a SO command, but which, for all practical purposes, was a SO Command. Another factor that limited the applicability of historical research scope was the change of threat from a conventional Soviet-style threat to the current asymmetric threat being presented by transnational terrorism.

Special Operations in US Strategy is a compilation of articles addressing the employment of SOF in the most effective manner. This book presents several papers discussing the issues of SOF employment, then provides additional feedback on the papers from subject matter experts (SMEs). Several articles are presented in this book that provide excellent background and historical information on how SO came to be what it is today. Discussions on organization for Low Intensity Conflict and the capabilities of SO during the 1980s provide excellent insight into the history of how the force structure that exists today and has the leading role in the War on Terror came into being.³⁷

The *Journal of Military History* provided an excellent break down of Operation EAGLE CLAW. The article, “Desert One and Its Disorders,” provides insight into how the operation was originally planned, and what the political environment was at the time, and how that affected the final authorization to execute the mission. The article also points out the major faults in the preparation and execution of the mission that led to the eventual scrubbing of the mission and the resulting deaths of the would-be rescuers.³⁸

War in the Shadows: The Guerilla in History by Robert Asprey provides an excellent look at the history of SO from Greek and Roman times, when the Scythians attacked Alexander the Great using unconventional and uncharacteristic means, to present-day SO. The history and case studies carry forward to the counter-drug

³⁷ Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz. Special Operations in US Strategy. National Defense University Press, 1984.

³⁸ Charles G. Cogan. “Desert One and Its Disorders.” *The Journal of Military History* 63, issue 1, (January 2003).

operations conducted in South America. Asprey spends a significant portion of the book on operations conducted in Vietnam and what went wrong and how it might have been corrected.³⁹

In Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War, Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch conduct an analysis of major military operations from the strategic level describing how a single wrong decision leading to compounding wrong decisions can create a catastrophic military failure. Cohen and Gooch focus on four different types of failure: failure to learn; failure to adapt; aggregate failure; and catastrophic failure. For each of these areas Cohen and Gooch performed an analysis of battles or operations demonstrating their theories.⁴⁰

In the book SPEC OPS: Case Studies in Special Warfare: Theory and Practice by William McRaven, several case studies are conducted demonstrating the crucial aspect of SOF timing in the conduct of SO. McRaven applies his theory to several case studies demonstrating how a SOF unit, normally outnumbered, can achieve “relative superiority” over the opposing force. McRaven’s case studies and analysis do an excellent job of portraying how critical timing and coordination is in the conduct of SO missions.⁴¹

4. The Spectrum of Threats USNORTHCOM Can Expect to Face

11 September 2001 opened the eyes of America to a different kind of threat. For over 200 years the United States considered herself safe and protected by two large bodies of water and friendly nations to the north and south as buffers. The threat to America that materialized with Al Qaeda requires a different way of thinking and preparing defenses against an attack. This new transnational asymmetric threat requires a different approach for Homeland Security and Defense planners.

In January 2004, the US Customs and Border Patrol published the “Terror Organization Reference Guide,” which is designed to act as a handbook for Customs and

³⁹ Robert B. Asprey. War in the Shadows: The Guerilla in History. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1994.

⁴⁰ Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch. Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War. New York, Free Press, 1990.

⁴¹ William H. McRaven. SPEC OPS: Case Studies in Special Warfare: Theory and Practice. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1996.

Border Patrol Officers, enabling the officers to more easily recognize terrorist as they attempt to infiltrate the United States. This guide lists thirty-six foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) as designated by the Secretary of State. In addition to these FTOs the guide lists an additional thirty-eight terrorist groups not designated as FTO. For each listing, the guide provides a description, location of operations, strength, and where and/or who provides external aid to the organization.⁴²

The US Army Training and Doctrine Command has published a document titled “A Military Guide to Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century,” which establishes that terrorism is an increasingly common form of modern warfare. The guide presents this argument through historical examples and the application of vignettes to describe how terrorists operate. The aim of this guide is to provide the military commander an explanation of the makeup and intentions of terrorists in order to allow the commander to better prepare for the possibility of terrorist attacks.⁴³

In the “Al Qaeda Targeting Guidance-v 1.0,” Thursday, 1 April 2004 the true danger of the mindset that is Al Qaeda can be seen. In this translated guidance, one can see the true hatred and blame that this organization has for anyone that is not associated with their beliefs or impedes their progress. Al Qaeda has but one solution; destroy the enemy and anyone associated with them at all costs.⁴⁴

The threat which USNORTHCOM deals with today will change little in the near future. The best that USNORTHCOM and the United States can hope to achieve over the next 7-10 years is a mitigation of this threat. The threat will remain as long as fundamentalists portray the US as an adversary worthy of destruction. In order to continue the mitigation of this threat to the Homeland, USNORTHCOM must understand and be prepared to defeat the capability which the threat poses.

⁴² Department of Homeland Security. Office of Border Patrol. *Terrorism Organization Reference Guide*, January 2004.

⁴³ Department of Defense. US Army Training and Doctrine Command, Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence. “A Military Guide to Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century,” Version 1.1. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. 1 August 2003.

⁴⁴ IntelCenter. “Al Qaeda Targeting Guidance-v 1.0 21:51:43 GMT, Thursday, 1 April 2004.” Tempest Publishing, LLC, Alexandria, Virginia. April 2004.

5. The Strategic and Political Environment in Which USNORTHCOM Operates

The US Congress passed the Posse Comitatus Act as a measure to focus the Army on defending the borders and interior of the US from outside threats and prevent involvement in civil law enforcement activities. A unique aspect of Posse Comitatus is that it is not a constitutional law but a statutory act.⁴⁵ Meaning the act was legislative only and not an amendment to the constitution. USNORTHCOM deals with Posse Comitatus on a daily basis. The USNORTHCOM Staff takes great pains not to overstep the bounds and guidelines that the US Government has placed on the military.

But overly broad application of Posse Comitatus has sometimes undermined simple operations; for fear that they violate the Act. This tendency has increased with the creation of USNORTHCOM. The truth is the only limitation Posse Comitatus places on the military is that it prevents the military from acting as a law enforcement agency or representative.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has left little doubt as to who will be in charge of a crisis situation occurring within the United States. Civilian authority will be explicit during domestic Crisis Response, with the military serving in a subordinate, supporting role. Exceptions to this rule of civilian-led Crisis Response can occur only when the President of the United States declares a National Defense Emergency, or invokes the Insurrection Act, declared during periods of civil unrest. Title 10 US Code, Chapter 15-Insurrection Act, Sec 332 states:

Use of militia and armed forces to enforce Federal authority,

Whenever the President considers that unlawful obstructions, combinations, or assemblages, or rebellion against the authority of the United States, make it impracticable to enforce the laws of the United States in any State or Territory by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, he may call into Federal service such of the militia of any State, and use such of the armed forces, as he considers necessary to enforce those laws or to suppress the rebellion.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Craig T. Trebilock. "The Myth of Posse Comitatus." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin* 5, no. 1 (Sep 02), 15.

⁴⁶ US Congress. *Law Cite 10 US Code, Chapter 15-Insurrection Act Sec 332*, available at <http://www.democracyunbound.com/insurrection.html>. accessed June 2004.

Two manpower studies have been conducted over the past six years on the proper make-up and manning of a TSOC, and on the question of the need for USNORTHCOM's SOC requirements. The first study was commissioned by the US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Director, Force Structure, Resources, Requirements, and Strategic Assessments Center in 1998, to determine the proper manning required for a TSOC to conduct its mission.⁴⁷ In this study, all of the existing TSOCs were evaluated to determine the proper manning necessary for the conduct of existing, probable, or contingency missions, ensuring that consideration was given to geographic peculiarities of the separate commands. The second manpower study, also commissioned by USSOCOM, addressed the specific requirements of USNORTHCOM with regard to the necessity of establishment of a TSOC. This study, conducted in Dec 2002, was based on the same criteria as the above-mentioned 1998 study. In conducting the study, the team used the Special Operations Command, Korea (SOC-K) "zero-based" manpower assessment as the model for function identification and the approximation of future workloads for SO in USNORTHCOM. Their findings were that, based on mission requirements, USNORTHCOM did not require a TSOC.⁴⁸

"The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism" directs that all available national power must be used against terrorism and those persons and states that support it. The Strategy describes the terrorist threat that currently confronts the nation and how it can be defeated. The Strategy also establishes that the defeat of terrorism will not come as the end of World War II did, with a signed declaration of surrender by a nation state. It will become evident only through the continued efforts of the United States and other nations determined to isolate and destroy terrorist organizations and those that support them.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Department of Defense. *United States Special Operations Command Force Development Division, Theater Special Operations Command Manpower Study*. MacDill AFB, FL: Special Operations Resource Requirements, 1998.

⁴⁸ Department of Defense. Memorandum For Record, United States Special Operations Command Manpower Analysis Trip. MacDill AFB, FL: Special Operations Resource Requirements, December 2002.

⁴⁹ United States. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. February 2003.

There is a strong correlation between mission success and the unity of forces and how these forces are structured, especially their C2. The most common theme of the various studies cited is the critical nature of a clear and concise C2 structure as a measure of success in C2 and SOF.

C. METHODOLOGY

In determining the courses of action to consider for the application of command and control of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR the research determined that only three courses of action were feasible. These courses of action were: creation of an organic Theater Special Operations Command for USNORTHCOM; establish a habitual association with a USSOCOM provided Joint Task Force (JTF); or maintain the current structure of the USNORTHCOM Battle Staff using the Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters construct to accomplish the task of C2 of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

1. Eliminated Courses of Action

Other courses of action were considered during the research but eliminated from further study. Some of these courses of action were: using the Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North (SJFHQ-N) to act as a basis for establishment of a Joint Task Force (JTF) to C2 SOF executing missions in the USNORTHCOM AOR; USSOCOM conduct of C2 of any SO being conducted in the USNORTHCOM AOR, independent of USNORTHCOM; Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH) wearing two hats, acts as the SOC for USSOUTHCOM and USNORTHCOM; and The Joint Staff conduct of C2 of all SO conducted in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

The SJFHQ-N course of action was eliminated because the SJFHQ-N is not capable of deploying as a unit to establish a JTF. The SJFHQ-N was established to provide Commander, USNORTHCOM with a package of deployable staff officers capable of providing near-real-time eyes-on information for the Commander. Although the initial concept of the SJFHQ-N was for this staff directorate to act as a “warm” portion of the USNORTHCOM staff able to deploy to establish a C2 element in the event of a crisis in reality, this organization does not possess the capability in equipment or

personnel to act as a JTF. The most appropriate application of this directorate is as a liaison package to an existing JTF, not as a JTF.⁵⁰

The second course of action considered and eliminated in the research was USSOCOM acting as the supported commander for the conduct of all SO missions in the USNORTHCOM AOR. This COA would violate one of the principles of war, unity of command. It is also not feasible for USNORTHCOM to expect USSOCOM to provide timely input and feedback to Commander, USNORTHCOM on day-to-day peacetime engagement missions being conducted by SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR. Although the Secretary of Defense directed that USSOCOM be the supported commander for planning for the War on Terror, this does not mean that USSOCOM can be responsive to the daily requirements of the USNORTHCOM Commander's requirements for SO integration in the operations and plans of USNORTHCOM on a daily basis without a significant change in the priorities of the Command. Currently, USSOCOM's focus is on the War on Terror and how to defeat the Al Qaeda threat.⁵¹

In order for SOCSOUTH to act as the SO component commander for USNORTHCOM, some significant force structure changes would have to occur along with agreements between the two Geographic Combatant Commanders on how the employment of the SOC would take place. This course of action was considered as a corollary to the study directed by the Secretary of Defense to consider the feasibility for combining USNORTHCOM and USSOUTHCOM into one GCC. In June 2004, the results of this study were briefed to the Secretary of Defense. The outcome of the study stated that although the concept is feasible, the end result did not provide sufficient gains to match the costs that would be incurred to create the merged command. Because of this recommendation, SOCSOUTH acting as a SOC for both commands was eliminated for this research.

The Joint Staff conducting C2 of any mission, be it SO or a conventional mission, is not feasible. The Joint Staff was not designed, organized nor equipped to execute

⁵⁰ Department of Defense. United States Northern Command, MAJ Jim Zietlow, USAF. "Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North" Brief (UNCLASSIFIED). 30 March 2004, printed from USNORTHCOM classified homepage, 36.

⁵¹ Department of Defense. US Special Operations Command. "2003-2004 SOF Posture Statement." Available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/policy/solic>, accessed April 2004.

command and control of forces conducting operations. Establishment of The Joint Staff capability to command and control operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR, would render the existence of USNORTHCOM redundant and unnecessary. Thus, further consideration of this COA was eliminated.

2. Missions in the USNORTHCOM AOR

In determining the possible USNORTHCOM SOF mission profiles the research considered the current and planned missions in existence which support the USNORTHCOM mission such as Joint Combined Exercises, SO peculiar exercises, and the current USNORTHCOM Special Operations Division approved mission statement. These missions occur regularly, and will continue to grow in frequency and importance as USNORTHCOM continues to refine its role in Homeland Defense. In addition to the SOF requirements to fulfill day-to-day needs for SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR, the wartime or Homeland Defense support required from SO in support of USNORTHCOM is significant. While most of these missions are classified, the probability for their occurrence is what is of significance for this research, and can be represented through unclassified research. In addition to this approach for determining USNORTHCOM SO missions, consideration was given to what other GCCs, such as US Central Command, US Southern Command, US European Command and US Pacific Command list as possible SO missions in their respective AORs. This comparison was conducted because of USNORTHCOM's relative short history of conducting SO.

3. Attribute Definitions

The attributes selected and discussed below were determined through coordination and discussion with professionals in the field of SO and Joint Operations. Each of these attributes has a quantitative value in its definition. In order to conduct the comparison of the courses of action to each other, the values were converted to a quantifiable score. This score is assigned on a comparative basis, that is, each course of action is compared to the others and then rank ordered based on the relative value of that attribute.

a. Responsiveness

How quickly can the command and control organization respond to a crisis event? What is the reaction time to get from the daily duty site to the USNC

Headquarters for further planning and follow-on execution of a mission? If the daily duty site is not co-located with USNORTHCOM Headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado then how quickly the organization can begin virtual collaboration with the USNORTHCOM Staff will be the basis of the attribute. This is not a measure of how long it takes to bring personnel in for crisis planning, as in an alert situation. The alert levels and reaction time requirements can be established no matter what the staff make-up is. In responding to an event, the organization must have an understanding of the current situation in the USNORTHCOM AOR. An organization that is not part of the day-to-day operations in USNORTHCOM will not be able to react in as timely a manner. This means that the organization will require a “ramp up” time in order to become aware of the current situation. Online Dictionary defines responsiveness as “reacting quickly.”⁵²

b. Continuity of C2

This is the habitual association of the organization’s headquarters and commander with the USNORTHCOM Staff and Commander. The Online Dictionary defines continuity as an “uninterrupted connection.”⁵³ This attribute can best be described as ensuring the relationship between the command conducting C2 of SOF and USNORTHCOM is established, rehearsed, and trained on a regular basis. In order for the relationship to be established, the command must conduct training with the USNORTHCOM Staff and Commander. This enables the command conducting C2 of SOF to better understand the make-up and interaction of the organizations that exist within and support USNORTHCOM. Along with continuity of the command and control structure, unity of command, one of the principles of war, is essential to a military operation.

c. Knowledge of the AOR

Understanding of the unique aspects of the USNORTHCOM AOR is significantly different than in other GCC AORs. Because USNORTHCOM’s AOR encompasses the Continental United States, there are requirements and limitations to the actions which USNORTHCOM can perform. In addition to these aspects in dealing with

⁵² Online Dictionary. <http://www.webster-dictionary.org/default.aspx> . accessed September 2004.

⁵³ Online Dictionary. <http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/continuity>. accessed September 2004.

a situation in the United States, the relationships the US Government has with Canada and Mexico play a significant part in the conduct of operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR. For an organization to have a good working knowledge of the USNORTHCOM AOR it must train to conduct operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

d. Manpower Cost

Where will the manpower to create the new staff organization come from? If there is little to no manpower impact on the existing organizations in the military then the course of action will score well in this category. The military has a finite number of personnel available to operate with, and the number of personnel who are authorized to occupy joint billets is regulated by US Congress. When a new organization is created the personnel who fill those billets are removed from other existing organizations to avoid exceeding the authorized total. While the reassignment of billets to meet new, higher priority requirements is not a bad thing, the benefit of the new organization has to outweigh the cost of completing the reapportionment.

e. SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency

SOF possess a unique skill set that other organizations do not foster nor maintain. SOF train to operate in and with foreign governments and cultures from the beginning of their training. Interacting with different cultures and ways of doing things is integrated into SOF training routine from the beginning. SOF have a certain familiarity with the cultural, geographical, political, social, economic, language and environmental conditions of the nation or nations that they work with.⁵⁴ The skill set that SOF inherently maintains in this regard can be applied to any situation. It is not limited to the region for which the Special Operator has trained. Once the Special Operator has the understanding of how to fit into one nation's culture, he can use these skills to quickly adjust to an unfamiliar one. Extending this concept, a Special Operator should be able to more quickly integrate with the Interagency. In addition to easily adjusting to the different culture of the Interagency, SOF routinely works with Interagency at all levels. This working relationship has been fostered over many years, and continues now in the execution of the War on Terror. An organization that has SOF as its backbone will score better with this attribute.

⁵⁴ Charles E. Simmons. "Special Forces: What Makes Them Special?" *Special Warfare*. April 2003 (16, 1), 20, 22.

4. Conduct of Analysis of Courses of Action

In conducting the analysis of the COAs, each COA was assessed individually against each of the attributes defined above. The attributes were discussed as they applied to each COA. Both positive and negative aspects of each attribute as it applies to a particular COA. After the separate individual comparison of the COAs, the research was developed to support a comparison of each COA to the other. Each COA was compared with the other as it rated in each attribute giving each COA a numerical value. In this research the lower the number the better the score. If the research determined that two or more COAs were equal, the score was then divided equally among the COA involved in the tie. The comparison of the COAs to the research determined which COA received the best rating as compared to the attributes.

Finally, the comparative scores of all three COAs, based on the defined attributes, determined which course of action best fits the needs and requirements for USNORTHCOM's Command and Control of Special Operations Forces in the Area of Responsibility. The implications of these findings were refined and discussed, with additional analysis to look for any shortcomings of the recommended course of action.

In the conclusion of the thesis, recommended areas of further interest and study were discussed. These are areas originally eliminated from the research as a means of managing the scope of the problem, or other which offer opportunities to explore possible branches of the research conducted by the author.

III. ANALYSIS

A. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of separate Special Operations (SO) Headquarters was not a new idea created by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Act. As early as World War II, SO was recognized as unique and requiring special considerations for mission support and control. As the implementation and use of SO became more prevalent in World War II, the need to synchronize SO with conventional operations became more evident to the Allied Commanders. In 1942, the Allied Chiefs of Staff created a combined Special Forces Headquarters in Algiers to better integrate and de-conflict SO being conducted in the African Theater.⁵⁵ This headquarters establishment set an early precedent for separate command and control structure for SO.

In 1984, Sam Sarkesian, Professor of Political Science, Loyola University and Chairman of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, delivered a paper to the seminar on “Organizational Strategy and Low Intensity Conflict.” In his paper Sarkesian stated the strategy of an organization must provide for freedom of maneuver in the development of flexible and imaginative ways to execute the mission. In Sarkesian’s argument, it correlates to a command organization whose primary mission is to plan, prepare, and execute SO. This ensures unity of command and coherency of operations.⁵⁶ Because the requirements and missions of SO differ significantly from conventional forces and operations, the requirement to have an organization that provides this freedom and flexibility for planning and execution of SO missions is key to the success of those operations.

Command and control of forces conducting combat or otherwise hazardous operations is foremost in the planning considerations when establishing contingency and operations plans. When a crisis situation arises, the question or debate cannot be who will be in charge of the operation. It is essential in ensuring the highest probability of

⁵⁵ Robert B. Asprey. War in the Shadows: The Guerilla in History. William Morrow & Company, Inc. New York, 1994, 313.

⁵⁶ Sam C. Sarkesian. “Organizational Strategy and Low Intensity Conflict.” Frank Burnett, B. Hugh Tovar, Richard Shultz. Special Operations in US Strategy. National Defense University Press, 1984, 279.

success for an operation that the C2 for the operation be established, trained and rehearsed. As in all things, the effects of time lost and wasted on the debate and decision cycle for who is in charge trickles down and compounds; further affecting the executing units' ability to successfully conduct the operation. To minimize this affect, the best solution is to have an organization pre-designated as the C2 organization for the conduct of SO in both crisis and normal operations.

This pre-designation follows a principle tenet of military operations to "train as you fight." In creating the best environment for success for an operating unit it is imperative that the unit understand and know how it fits into the overall scheme of maneuver created by the Commander of the operation or mission. The C2 organization must be established and rehearsed. Several options exist to ensure the C2 structure meets the needs of the commander when a crisis arises, ranging from the C2 organization responsible for the conduct of SO being involved in the day-to-day activities of the Geographic Combatant Command's to participation in exercises only, as the SO C2 element. The key ingredient for success for this structure is that the training and rehearsals take place on a regular basis.

B. THREATS TO THE HOMELAND

The threat to the Homeland has changed significantly. No longer are the friendly nations to the North and South a sufficient buffer. Nor can the vast expanses of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans insulate the United States from the newly developed capability of the threats against the US to include the proliferation of nuclear technologies and long range missiles from Korea. In his Report for Congress, "HLS and Reserves," Robert Goldich states that the current terrorism threat must be defined as additive or displaced. Additive means the terrorist threat is unlike anything we have faced, and all previous existing threats still remain. If the threat is displaced then it has taken the place of a previous threat, e.g., the Soviet bombers flying over the North Pole. Because of this additive ness of a new threat capability, Robert Goldich reasons that a new force structure is required

to face it.⁵⁷ This theory brings justification to the need to create not only a new command such as USNORTHCOM but an equally new SO command to match this newly developed threat capability.

This new threat capability can be characterized as being full spectrum. The threats range from all out war waged by a nation state to organized crime, such as drug smuggling. It is readily apparent that DOD is responsible for all-out war and that Law Enforcement Agencies are responsible for criminal activities. The area of concern for the Homeland is the gray area between these two clearly defined extremes. This seam between DOD and DOJ is where the US is most vulnerable. Since the US cannot predict or determine which nation, nations or non-state adversaries will attack the Homeland, the planning effort cannot be against an organization or nation; it must be directed against the capability that an adversary that threatens the US might possess or develop. The middle ground between crime and all out war is the subject of much discussion, and drives the cooperation between DOD and Law Enforcement Agencies.⁵⁸

In the 1990s, the US became one of the favorite and most lucrative targets of terrorism after the collapse of the Soviet Union left the US as the only remaining superpower.⁵⁹ Because of the steady increase in the gap of military power between the US and other countries, the US, as a target, continues to be a favorite of the terrorists. US Army Training and Doctrine Command's Guide to Terrorism states that terrorism will continue to be the more commonly used form of attack, to counter the US strength in military power.⁶⁰ Terrorism allows any organization or a radical individual to become known throughout the world by conducting a single successful attack, by which the terrorist hopes to create terror in a populace and to influence that populace to make the political or social changes which the terror organization is attempting to achieve. The

⁵⁷ Robert L. Goldich. "Homeland Security and Reserves: Threat, Mission, and Force Structure Issues." Report for Congress, received through the CRS Web. 10 September 2002, 2.

⁵⁸ Department of Defense. Col Karin Murphy, USAF and MAJ Thomas Goss, USA, US Northern Command, J5S Policy. "Department of Defense Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept." February 2004, 2, 7.

⁵⁹ Jeffery D. Brake. "Terrorism and the Military's Role in Domestic Crisis Management: Background and Issues for Congress." Congressional Research Service Report for US Congress, 19 April 2001, 3.

⁶⁰ Department of Defense. US Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence. "A Military Guide to Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century" Version 1.1. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. 1 August 2003, 6.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Strategic Outlook for 2004-2009 predicts that terrorist groups as a whole will begin to increase their level of cooperation to defeat their common enemies.⁶¹ As these organizations become more sophisticated in the application of their weapons and use of unconventional weapons, e.g., airliners and trucks as bombs, the concern for how to defeat them becomes more of an issue and the application of a capability to defeat these organizations is forefront in the planning for their defeat.

The threat to America continues to increase with evidence that suggests terrorists have become more idealistic and extreme in their methods and objectives. With this continued shift toward extremism, the terrorist's concern for a backlash because of heinous attacks on civilians or infrastructure no longer exists.⁶² This radical extremism can be seen in the guidance that was issued by Al Qaeda in early 2004. The disregard for what and how the majority of the world population looks at the methods used by Al Qaeda has not deterred their efforts to find new and innovative means of attacking their targets, to include WMD.

The latest version of Al Qaeda targeting guidance directs its followers to select primary targets within the following categories: faith, economic, and human. In the case of the human category of targets, the guidance states that the enemy must be made to understand there are no limits and no borders, further stating that the land of the infidels should be turned into hell.⁶³ This type of directive targeting guidance which strikes not only at the national core but at the social well-being of the US cannot be ignored, and must be considered in preparing the defense of the Homeland. In addition to this specific guidance from Al Qaeda, the Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept states that some possible goals of an enemy attacking the Homeland are: mass American casualties;

⁶¹ Department of Justice. "Federal Bureau of Investigation Strategic Plan 2004-2009." <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/strategicplan/strategicplanfull.pdf>. accessed September 2004, 15.

⁶² US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, I-7.

⁶³ IntelCenter. "al Qaeda Targeting Guidance-v 1.0." Tempest Publishing, LLC., Alexandria, VA. 21:51:43 Greenwich Mean Time, Thursday, 1 April 2004, 3.

destruction of property; damage to US economy and agriculture; influence the US population to create political change; and any impediment to the movement and employment of the US military.⁶⁴

Al Qaeda is seen as the principal threat to the US; however, other terror organizations and criminal activities may or more likely are conducting supporting activities, either in close coordination with Al Qaeda or just taking advantage of the new, target rich environment. The threat to our national borders through the approaches⁶⁵ continues even more so now than in the past. The continued influx of illegal immigrants, drugs, and contraband passing across the borders of the US is proof that the threat remains to the Homeland from these venues.⁶⁶

To counter these threats and the new capabilities that enemies of the US may present, USNORTHCOM must develop the capability to defeat these threats. As was discussed earlier the best weapon fit to target terrorism is SO. SO's unique skill set and ability to operate in adverse or non-permissive environments is a key skill asset available to the Commander, USNORTHCOM. Employment of this capability at the proper time and against the proper target, and how those decisions can best be made, is what will be discussed in this chapter. An understanding of the threat is key to understanding the importance of Homeland Defense and how to counter the threat, be it eliminating it prior to its realization or mitigating the threat once it has materialized within or near the Homeland.

C. MISSIONS

1. Homeland Security and Homeland Defense

Understanding these two mission sets and how DOD, more importantly USNORTHCOM, conduct them are the key issue to establishing the need to create a chain of command and control for SOF conducting operations within the

⁶⁴ Department of Defense. Colonel Karin Murphy, USAF and Major Thomas Goss, USA, US Northern Command, J5S Policy. "Department of Defense Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept." February 2004, 14.

⁶⁵ Approaches – The approaches are those lines of travel and trade that allow commerce and people to enter the US either legally or illegally. Trade routes that have been used for hundreds of years or some international ones that have been used for thousands are still used by terrorist organizations to maneuver their operatives throughout the world.

⁶⁶ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, I-8.

USNORTHCOM AOR. Neither of these mission sets are new to warfare or to the US military. What has changed is that they are now in the forefront of every American's mind and vernacular. 9/11 changed the way the US looks at the threats that exist in the world. It also demonstrated the capability of these threats to use unconventional means to level the playing field between a small band of operators and the strongest military in the world.

In the newly developing military doctrine describing Homeland Security, the Homeland is defined as "the physical region that includes the Continental United States (CONUS), Alaska, US Territories and possessions, surrounding territorial waters and airspace."⁶⁷ The military describes two main regions of concern in conducting Homeland Security and Defense: Forward Regions and Approaches. The forward regions are areas outside of the Homeland. The approaches are described as the region "extending from the limits of the Homeland to the forward region." The approaches are not a constant area and vary depending on the route a threat may use in order to conduct an attack on the Homeland.⁶⁸ This does not refer exclusively to the smuggling of illegal aliens across the borders. It also includes flight paths of cruise missile, bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Simply put, Homeland Security encompasses the efforts put forth to deter an enemy attack and preparations conducted to mitigate the consequences of an attack should it occur. The Department of Homeland Security is the Lead Federal Agency (LFA) responsible for this mission set. The USNORTHCOM Battle Staff and Crisis Action Planning process describes Homeland Security as "a concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the US; reduce vulnerability to terrorism; and to minimize the damage and recovery from attacks that do occur."⁶⁹ The National Strategy for Homeland Security identifies the following areas of focus for increasing Homeland Security and achieving the objectives of the National Strategy: intelligence and warning;

⁶⁷ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, V.

⁶⁸ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, 10.

⁶⁹ Department of Defense. LTC Ross Brown, US Northern Command, J37 Training and Exercises. "USNORTHCOM Battle Staff and Crisis Action Process." (Unclassified) Printed 17 June 2004 from USNORTHCOM classified Homepage, 3.

border and transportation security; domestic counterterrorism; protecting National critical infrastructure and key assets protection; defense against catastrophic threats; international cooperation; interoperability; and emergency preparedness and response.⁷⁰ These areas cross all departments of the government and must be coordinated through the Interagency to be successful in these areas. The DOD role in Homeland Security is global in nature, creating a defense-in-depth of the Homeland. The defense-in-depth includes actions which deter attacks through certain overwhelming retaliation and pre-emption to eliminate the enemy's capability to conduct an attack.⁷¹ These actions are executed in the forward regions and approaches in order to prevent attacks from reaching the Homeland. In this aspect of Homeland Security, DOD's missions have not changed significantly in the past seventy years: defeat the enemy before his threatening capability can be realized in the Homeland.

Homeland Defense is the active conduct of defeating a threat that exists, be it in a domestic action as designated by the President or in or against a country, nation-state or non-state actors. The DOD is the LFA for these actions. These actions can range from conducting a hostage rescue to launching cruise missiles against a targeted threat. The Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept says the intent of Homeland Defense operations is to "ensure the integrity and security of the Homeland by detecting, deterring, preventing and defeating external threats and aggression as early and as far from the US border as possible."⁷² Homeland Defense is what the DOD exists to conduct. For DOD the demarcation between Homeland Defense and Security is not a problematic. The main difference between the two exists in the subset missions of providing military assistance to civil authorities under Homeland Security and defending against foreign threats to the Homeland. A simple way to distinguish between Defense and Security is to note who the LFA is. Generally speaking, if DOD is the LFA then the operation is normally a Homeland Defense mission. Within the Office of the Secretary

⁷⁰ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, vi.

⁷¹ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, vii-viii.

⁷² Department of Defense. Colonel Karin Murphy, USAF and Major Thomas Goss, USA, US Northern Command, J5S Policy. "Department of Defense Homeland Security Joint Operating Concept." February 2004, 2.

of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Homeland Defense (ASD (HD)) is responsible for the supervision of all DOD Homeland Defense missions.⁷³

2. USNORTHCOM Missions

In distinguishing the importance of the establishment and mission of USNORTHCOM, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated, “We should not have the same authorities for Northern Command that we do for other areas of responsibility. There is an enormous difference.”⁷⁴ USNORTHCOM has the same missions as the other Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) plus the missions of being the last line of defense in defending the Homeland and providing support to civil authorities when requested and approved. Another significant difference that distinguishes USNORTHCOM from the other GCCs is that the time to respond to a crisis is significantly shortened and the consequences of that crisis are much more significant because it is the Homeland. Typical USNORTHCOM missions range from providing C-130 aircraft equipped with fire fighting equipment to assist in the fighting of forest fires, to conducting maritime intercept operations of suspected terrorist vessels, to Ground Based Missile Defense (GMD).



Figure 2. US Combatant Commands' Areas of Responsibility⁷⁵

⁷³ Department of Defense. “Report to Congress on Establishment of US Northern Command.” September 2003, 7.

⁷⁴ Department of Defense. “UCP Review Issue Memo.” (Unclassified) Printed from US Northern Command classified homepage, 17 June 2004.

⁷⁵ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft). 26 March 2004, II-2.

Some other normal operating missions that USNORTHCOM performs are Theater Security Cooperation (TSC), vulnerability assessments of DOD facilities, force protection of military installations within the AOR, support to National Special Security Events (NSSEs), GMD, and counter-drug and counter transnational threat operations via Joint Task Force-North (JTF-N). SO supports each of these mission areas except GMD on a daily basis.

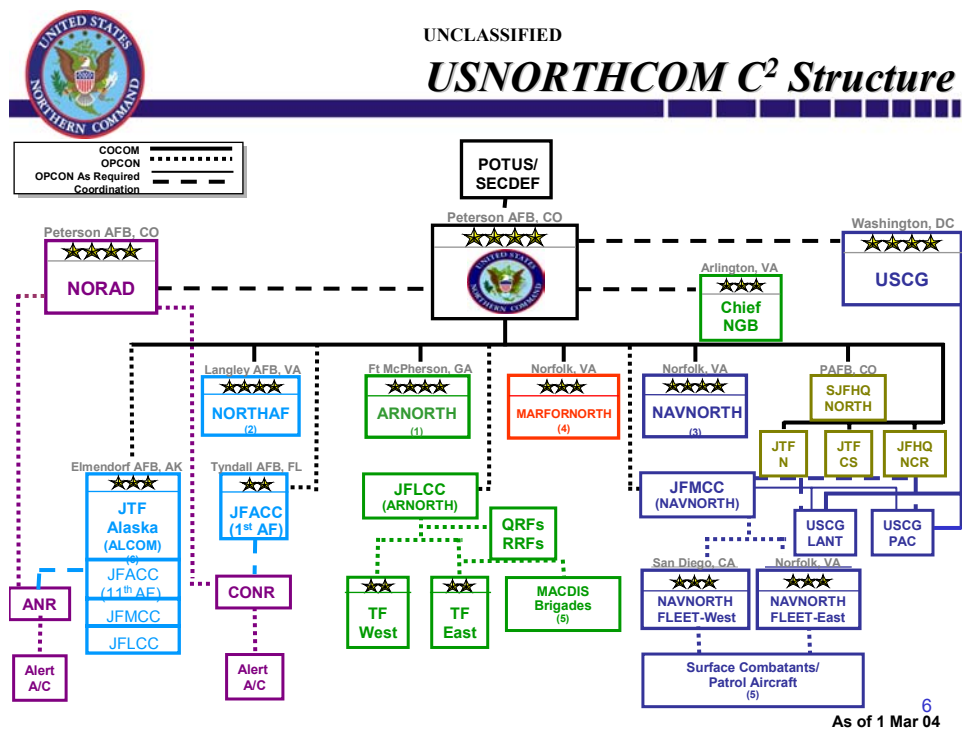
Interagency coordination and interaction are a key element of USNORTHCOM's daily operations. Due to the nature of the USNORTHCOM AOR close coordination with civil agencies is the only way that USNORTHCOM can successfully conduct operations in a domestic environment. Some senior level military officers and civilians suggest that USNORTHCOM should approach this cooperation with the Interagency as part of its theater engagement plan. This approach would allow a better focus of the Command to incorporate state and local officials in the Homeland Security process.⁷⁶ SOF has worked with the FBI for years in establishing, rehearsing with and training their hostage rescue team (HRT). SOF has also helped the FBI develop this capability and a capability to disarm WMD. In the recent past, SOF have worked with local law enforcement officers, training both snipers and special weapons and tactics teams (SWAT) in support of counter-drug operations.

In the conduct of crisis management operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR, SO plays a much more significant role. Some of the related USNORTHCOM missions are: engagement of a ballistic missile via GMD; opposing an invading force; support to civil authorities in the event of a natural disaster; and counterterrorism operations. SOF is the lead in the USNORTHCOM AOR for the conduct of counterterrorism operations.

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is a separate combined command which has the responsibility of defending the US and Canada from attacks from the air. A layman's definition of their mission is that they are responsible for threats one inch above the surface to the bottom of space. In other words, NORAD is responsible for "air breather" threats that fly. Currently, there are plans under

⁷⁶ Bert B. Tussing and James Kievit. Collins Center Senior Symposium, "DOD, NORTHCOM, and the Department of Homeland Security." Center for Strategic Leadership, US Army War College. April 2003, Vol. 03-03, 1-2.

consideration to expand the responsibilities of NORAD to include Mexican airspace. Discussion is also being given to establishing a “NORAD like” defense organization to counter the maritime threat to North America within the USNORTHCOM organization as a combined command with the Canadians.



⁷⁷ Department of Defense. LTC Ross Brown, USNORTHCOM, “USNORTHCOM Battle Staff and Crisis Action Process Brief” (Unclassified) accessed on the USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, 31 March 2004, 6.

This thesis does not advocate a change to the process; however, this process is a contributing factor to the reaction time of USNORTHCOM in the conduct of crisis management operations.

Secretary Rumsfeld has described three situations in which he foresees that military resources may be requested to support civil authorities domestically: situations which require traditional military missions; a crisis or emergency situation which is catastrophic in nature; and providing security assistance for NSSEs. SOF's role in each of these is significant. In the traditional military missions, SOF will perform in its traditional role of direct action, strategic reconnaissance, counterterrorism, etc. In a crisis situation, SOF's main role will likely be in support of disarming weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or in a counterterrorism role such as hostage rescue or providing technical assistance to the national asset commander. For NSSEs, SOF provides expertise in planning and pre-positioning forces before the event in order to provide a shorter reaction time if a crisis does occur at the event site.

SOF operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR are a significant factor towards the success of the command. A Government Accounting Office report from 1997 stated that, "SOF is considered an essential element for achieving National Security Objectives." Another finding was that GCC Commanders consider SOF as their first force of choice for both peacetime and combat missions.⁷⁸ A crisis situation in the USNORTHCOM AOR has a greater impact on the US population because it is no longer in a foreign land; it is happening here in the Homeland. SOF support to USNORTHCOM missions, be they in support of daily operations or in crisis management, are an integral aspect of the success of USNORTHCOM.

3. USNORTHCOM Special Operations Missions

As discussed above, SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR can span the full range of SO missions, including (but not limited to) direct action, counter-proliferation, special reconnaissance, psychological operations, and counterterrorism. SO in support of USNORTHCOM have two focus areas where the skill sets of SOF best support the Commander, USNORTHCOM – TSC and counterterrorism. Although other SOF skills

⁷⁸ Government Accounting Office. "Special Operations Forces: Opportunities to Preclude Overuse and Misuse." Letter Report, GAO/NSIAD-97-85. 15 May 1997, 1.

are used, these two mission sets are the mainstay of the SO effort in the USNORTHCOM AOR. TSC is conducted in a normal operations non-crisis situation in support of the War on Terror and the Commander's vision for integrating countries in the USNORTHCOM AOR to supporting the USNORTHCOM mission of defending the approaches to the Homeland. Preparation for and the conduct of counterterrorism are continuous operations for USNORTHCOM and can be executed at a moment's notice in a crisis situation.

USNORTHCOM requires near instantaneous conduct of SO in support of crisis events and planning. Because USNORTHCOM is the last line of defense against attacks on the Homeland it is imperative that USNORTHCOM have the capability to execute operations in a timely fashion. The only means of successfully achieving this criterion is through the conduct of training and rehearsals, forming habitual associations between USNORTHCOM and subordinate and apportioned commands.⁷⁹

The frequency or likelihood of a crisis event occurring in the USNORTHCOM AOR is low, even in this day and age of heightened terrorist threats. Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security states clearly that DOD must be ready to rapidly respond to defend against attacks should pre-emptive actions fail.⁸⁰ Still, the chance of a successful attack remains, and what makes this possibility an issue is the damage that it would cause to the American well-being and outlook on life, and the perceived, if not actual view that the DOD had failed in its mission to protect the Homeland. Any terrorist event in the USNORTHCOM AOR could be deemed catastrophic because it has occurred in or near the Homeland, *again*. If a terrorist attack occurs in the USNORTHCOM AOR, it is occurring in America's backyard and that is too close for the American population. An attack of this nature would be considered a failure in the US Government's effort to defeat terrorism.

An additional area where SO focus can support the GCC is through intelligence operations. SOF have been used as "Global Scouts" for years because of their ability to

⁷⁹ Currently, USNORTHCOM does not have any assigned or apportioned forces. In order for USNORTHCOM to execute a mission it must request forces through the Joint Staff through the Request For Forces (RFF) procedure.

⁸⁰ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-26, *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security*, (Final Coordinating Draft), 26 March 2004, III-3.

create relationships with foreign militaries and their host governments.⁸¹ SOF has been used as the lead element for US Forces in US foreign relations for years. This role of Global Scouts gives the SOF a unique capability to gather intelligence and conduct surveillance and reconnaissance in order to establish the support network that may be required for future operations.⁸²

The frequency of these TSC and counterterrorism missions varies significantly. Of course CT mission frequency cannot be measured or even estimated. The likelihood and probability of a CT mission depends on the information available and the analysts who provide the information. TSC, on the other hand, is an ever-increasing mission. As relationships become more established between USNORTHCOM and countries within its AOR these missions will become more commonplace. Eventually USNORTHCOM's TSC program will be as robust as it is for other GCCs. This increase in TSC mission frequency will drive a proportionally greater need for SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

The most likely employment of counterterrorism SO in a domestic role will be in support of the Department of Justice (DOJ). Not only can SO assist in crisis events by providing additional capabilities both technical and tactical, SO can also provide training to law enforcement personnel, to enhance their capability to conduct these missions.⁸³ Presidential Decision Directive 39 (PDD 39) established DOJ as the LFA CT domestic with the DOD providing technical and tactical support as requested and approved. The FBI, as the LFA for DOJ in CT, has identified four areas in which the agency may request military assistance in support of domestic law enforcement when facing a terrorist threat, including WMD threats:

- 1) Providing technical support and assistance to law enforcement and other crisis response personnel;
- 2) Interdicting and apprehending those responsible for a terrorist act;
- 3) Restoring law and order following an incident; and
- 4) Abating the consequences of a terrorist act.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Mark Jones and Wes Rehorn. "Special Operations Forces—Integration in Joint Warfighting." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, March 2003, 6.

⁸² Department of Defense. "Homeland Security and Special Operations: Sorting Out Procedures, Capabilities and Operations Issues." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, March 2003, 23.

⁸³ Department of Defense. "Homeland Security and Special Operations: Sorting Out Procedures, Capabilities, and Operational Issues." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*. March 2003, 21, 23.

⁸⁴ Jeffrey D. Brake. "Terrorism and the Military's Role in Domestic Crisis Management: Background and Issues for Congress." Report for Congress, received through the CRS web. 27 January 2003, 11-12.

The above military support to DOJ is the most likely scenario, in the unlikely event that the FBI requires assistance. The worst-case scenario envisioned is an event deemed so dangerous and disruptive by the President that he invokes the Insurrection Act. This Act allows the military to take the lead in law enforcement operations being conducted in a domestic scenario. In this case the DOD becomes the LFA. The probability of this occurring is even smaller than the previous scenario, but once again, the consequences of its occurrence or of not being prepared for it would be catastrophic.

There are three key things to remember when considering SO missions to be conducted in the USNORTHCOM AOR. First, on a daily basis the most probable employment of SOF will be in support of TSC. This will be conducted in a deliberate fashion; ensuring ample planning and coordination are completed prior to the execution of the mission. Second, in the unlikely event of a counterterrorism crisis situation, SOF must be employed rapidly and decisively in order to ensure the highest probability of success. Finally, even though the likelihood of SOF employment in support of a domestic counterterrorism event is minimal, the consequences of not being prepared to provide support to DOJ would be catastrophic.

D. COURSE OF ACTION DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

In this section a description of the COAs will be given, followed by an assessment of each COA based on selected attributes, and then a comparison of the COA to the attributes. As discussed earlier, each of the below described COAs were derived from discussions with experts in the field of SOF employment.

1. USNORTHCOM Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters

USNORTHCOM's Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters (AJFHQ) is an organizational change to the standard Napoleonic style "J" staff organization consisting of: J1 Personnel, J2 Intelligence, J3 Operations, J4 Logistics, etc. The AJFHQ concept allows the Commander to quickly reconstitute his staff into operational cells, where the functional staff work can be integrated to better support current, future and long range operations and planning. This type of task centered organization is an attempt to prevent the "stove piping" that can occur in the traditional staff planning process. This type of transformed organization was directed by the SecDef in the Defense Planning Guidance

(DPG) for Fiscal Year 2004.⁸⁵ The AJFHQ for USNORTHCOM consists of groups of representatives from each of the USNORTHCOM Staff elements forming functional working groups which can be tailored in size to fit the operational and strategic needs of the Commander. Some of the main groups are the Commander's Executive Board (CEB), Current Operations Group (COG), Operations Planning Group (OPG), Joint Planning Group (JPG) and Joint Information Superiority Group (JISG).⁸⁶ The CEB consists of the Directors from USNORTHCOM and its task organization varies, based on the recommendations from the Chief of Staff and Operations Director to the Commander. Each of the other groups has a core element which consists of the basic staff functions required to execute planning operations.

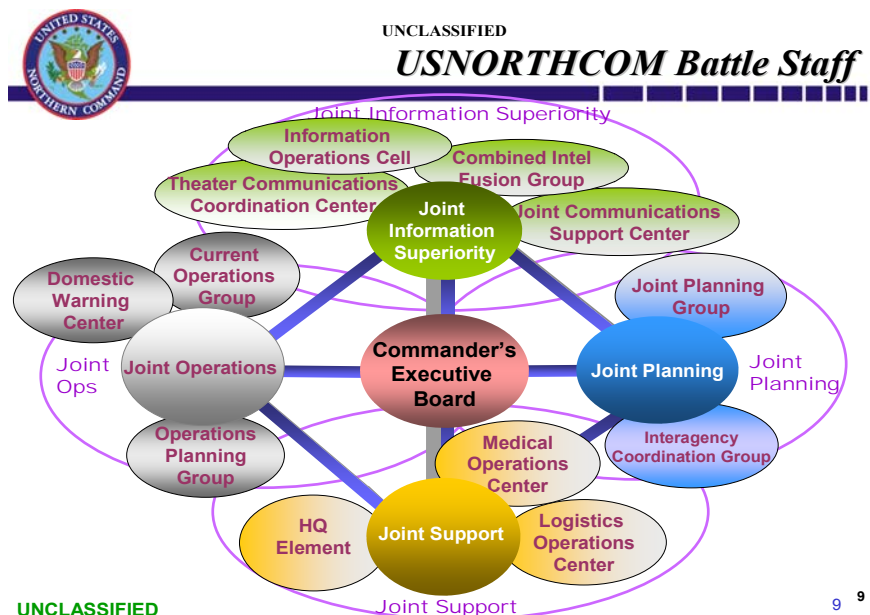


Figure 4. USNORTHCOM Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Department of Defense. US Northern Command, Major Jim Zietlow, USAF. "Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North Brief." (Unclassified) 30 March 2004. Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, 17 June 2004, 35.

⁸⁶ Department of Defense. US Northern Command, LTC Ross Brown, USA. "USNORTHCOM Battlestaff and Crisis Action Process." (Unclassified) Printed March 2004 from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, 8-9.

⁸⁷ Department of Defense. LTC Ross Brown, USNORTHCOM, "USNORTHCOM Battle Staff and Crisis Action Process Brief" (Unclassified) Printed from the USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, March 2004, 9.

Additionally, the DPG states that each GCC is to establish a “SJFHQ (Standing Joint Force Headquarters) by FY 2005 reflecting standards established by JFCOM (Joint Forces Command)...”⁸⁸ The SJFHQ is a joint C2 element that has permanent manning from a cross section of the staff functions within the Command. It can act as the nucleus to create a JTF for execution of C2 at an event. One of the main purposes of this organization is to maintain a staff directorate that is “*hot*” and ready to command at the pre-crisis to contingency operations level. A key goal in a SJFHQ’s ability to staying *hot* is to maintain situational awareness and understanding.⁸⁹ This staff directorate allows the Commander significant flexibility in how he prepares for and executes a mission. The methodology of the design of the SJFHQ was developed to minimize the setbacks caused by “functional stovepipes”. These stovepipes impede cross-talk and sharing of information and knowledge in an organization. “This standing joint C2 element provides unique capabilities for crisis response because of its embedded relationships within the GCC Staff, pre-crisis understanding of the focus area of operations and use in place of the Collaborative Information Environment.”⁹⁰

The SJFHQ maintains its situational awareness through a task organization that mirrors that of the AJFHQ. The SJFHQ task organization’s similarity in nature to the AJFHQ begins with the Operations Planning Team (OPT). This organization parallels the COG and OPG of the AJFHQ, and maintains awareness through active participation by SJFHQ participating in these Groups. This allows the SJFHQ to have an operational understanding of an event from its onset, thus minimizing the time required for a deploying element to understand the operational environment in which it will be working.

⁸⁸ Department of Defense. US Northern Command, Major Jim Zietlow, USAF. “Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North Brief.” (Unclassified) 30 March 2004. Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, June 2004, 35.

⁸⁹ Department of Defense. US Northern Command, Major Jim Zietlow, USAF. “Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North Brief.” (Unclassified) 30 March 2004. Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified homepage, 36.

⁹⁰ Department of Defense. US Northern Command, “Standing Operating Procedures and Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Standing Joint Force Headquarters” DRAFT (Unclassified). Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, July 2004, 3-1.



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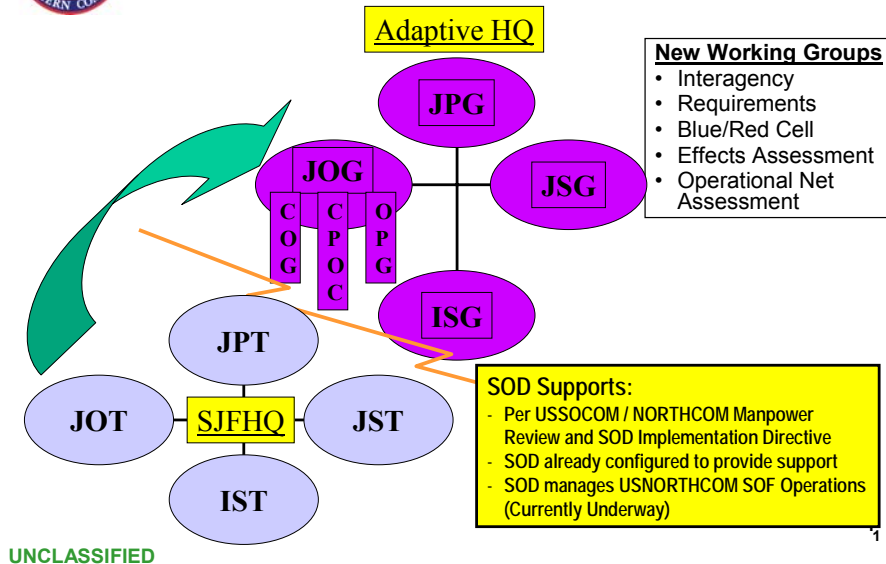


Figure 5. Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North⁹¹

The GCC has three basic employment options for the SJFHQ for crisis response:

1) Employ the SJFHQ Director as the Commander of a JTF and use the SJFHQ Staff as the base element to be augmented to fully functional JTF. The SJFHQ is not manned to be a fully functional headquarters on its own.

2) Use the SJFHQ to augment a component command to create a JTF. This integration of the SJFHQ will minimize the transition of the component command into a JTF.

3) The SJFHQ remains integrated into the GCC staff and the crisis is handled by the component or sub-unified Commander as designated by the GCC.

The Commander will select which course of action best supports the national objectives and scope of the event for which he is the Supported Commander.⁹² For pre-crisis or non-crisis activities the Commander may direct the SJFHQ to act as the lead

⁹¹ Department of Defense. "US Northern Command Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North Task Organization Slide." (Unclassified) Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, November 2004.

⁹² Department of Defense. US Northern Command. "Standing Operating Procedures and Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Standing Joint Force Headquarters" DRAFT (Unclassified). Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, July 2004, 3-18.

planning element for an operation, drawing on the remaining Directorates as the situation or requirements dictate. This flexibility provides the Commander with a unique opportunity which previously did not exist. By maintaining a staff directorate that has an understanding of the daily operations and more importantly an understanding of an operation from its genesis, the time that is lost in preparing a JTF for an operation is mitigated. The Commander also has the option of using the SJFHQ as the lead directorate to coordinate the planning and execution of “discreet, time sensitive crisis response missions.”⁹³

SOF representation in the USNORTHCOM AJFHQ is at two different levels. Within the AJFHQ members of the USNORTHCOM Special Operations Division (SOD) are integrated into the staff as individuals. These members perform the functions of the SOF expert in those Groups. Currently, the SOD also maintains members in the JPG and OPG. Their purpose is to ensure that SOF equities are maintained in the planning and execution of operations.

In addition to this individual augmentation in the AJFHQ, the SJFHQ has two SOF representatives integrated into the OPT and JPT. Some of the responsibilities of the SOF staff officers on SJFHQ are to act as a single point of contact for all SOF interactions with other commands and organizations. This includes other Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) and USSOCOM. These individuals are also responsible to provide expertise on SO capabilities and limitations for the rest of the staff.⁹⁴

2. USNORTHCOM Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters Comparison to Attributes

a. Responsiveness

AJFHQ is, along with the SJFHQ, a very responsive organization. The SJFHQ allows the staff officers to maintain a continuous link to what is going on. If the SJFHQ is used as a base to form a JTF this knowledge of the situation will be inherent to the organization as it is formed, minimizing the ramp-up time required to execute a crisis

⁹³ Department of Defense. US Northern Command. “Standard Operating Procedures and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for the Standing Joint Force Headquarters.” DRAFT (Unclassified). Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, July 2004, 3-18.

⁹⁴ Department of Defense. US Northern Command. “Standard Operating Procedures and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for the Standing Joint Force Headquarters.” DRAFT (Unclassified). Printed from USNORTHCOM Classified Homepage, July 2004, 3-5.

situation. Even if the SJFHQ is partially deployed to support a JTF, the element that is deploying brings with it the knowledge of the situation. Because the daily J-Staff configuration forms the AJFHQ of USNORTHCOM, the knowledge of current affairs and issues is maintained as the staff transitions from daily operations to a crisis situation. In addition to knowledge of the situation, AJFHQ has an in-depth understanding of the unique issues and problems that USNORTHCOM must contend with when conducting operations in the AOR.

However, because the SO expertise is dispersed throughout the AJFHQ, the organization's ability to C2 a SO in the AOR is in question. As was stated earlier, it is imperative for an organization commanding SOF to have an extensive knowledge of SO, its strengths and weaknesses. Also, in following doctrine a SO-capable staff organization must be brought in to provide C2 of any SO being conducted in the AOR.

b. Continuity of C2

For major operations conducted in the USNORTHCOM AOR, the AJFHQ provides the commander the habitual association of a staff that plans and trains together on a daily basis. However, since doctrine states that SO should be commanded by SOF this type of organization does not provide for the best task organization of a command to ensure the highest probability of success for SO. There is likely to be little to no habitual relationship established with the executing SOF and the AJFHQ. Since USSOCOM and The Joint Staff adhere to the doctrine that SOF commands SOF, an outside organization will have to be brought into the equation. This outside organization will not have a habitual understanding of the make-up of the USNORTHCOM AJFHQ and how it should interface with the Command.

c. Knowledge of the AOR

The AJFHQ, because of its origin in the USNORTHCOM Staff, has intimate knowledge of the AOR. Working daily in the USNORTHCOM AOR brings with it the knowledge of the laws and regulations which govern USNORTHCOM operations and plans, everything from Posse Comitatus to the needs of local sheriffs and firefighters and federal agencies. This knowledge cannot be gained in a few hours of briefings as an outside organization stands up to become a JTF working for the USNORTHCOM Commander.

d. Manpower Cost

The AJFHQ formation has little to no impact on manpower as an organization unto itself. However, when an outside organization is brought in or established to C2 SO in the AOR there will be a significant impact on manpower throughout the services to create it. This manpower drain from other results from causes the construction of an ad hoc organization to execute the mission.

e SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency

As discussed above, SO staff officers are dispersed throughout the AJFHQ organization. This type of dispersment does not lend itself a quality interaction between the SO staff officers and the Interagency. Because the SO staff officers are not a cohesive group within the AJFHQ their skills and abilities cannot be used to the command's advantage in coordinating and integrating with the Interagency. The limited experience and SO know-how that the command possesses becomes diluted with this type of organization and is not conducive to successful SO.

3. Theater Special Operations Command North

Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) are assigned, in accordance with the Unified Command Plan (UCP), sub-unified commands under each GCC except USNORTHCOM. The purpose of the TSOC is to provide the Commander with advice on employment of SOF and to have a deployable headquarters which can act as the base for a JSOTF or deploy as a JSOTF itself. TSOCs were established to ensure that the full capability of SOF is applied to the operational continuum that the GCCs face on an everyday basis.⁹⁵

Each TSOC has a slightly different task organization, depending upon its AOR and mission requirements as assigned by the GCC the TSOC supports. The standard approach for employment of a TSOC for operations is to form the staff into a JSOTF or a JFSOCC. While this approach is feasible for short duration operations, it becomes extremely difficult to maintain for an extended period of time without augmentation from outside organizations.⁹⁶ In addition to being responsible for the formation of a JSOTF,

⁹⁵ Henry H. Shelton. "Coming of Age: Theater Special Operations Commands." *Joint Force Quarterly*, Winter, 1996-97, 51.

⁹⁶ Department of Defense. "Joint Special Operations Insights, June 2002." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned*. March 2003, 32.

the TSOC Commander acts as a Joint Force Commander, theater SOF advisor and Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander.⁹⁷ The manning of TSOCs consists of staff officers and civilians with experience in SO. As in all staff organizations, some of these officers have more SO experience than others. The advantage the TSOC provides the GCC is that the TSOC staff is focused on SO, either unilaterally, or in support of a larger campaign or operation.

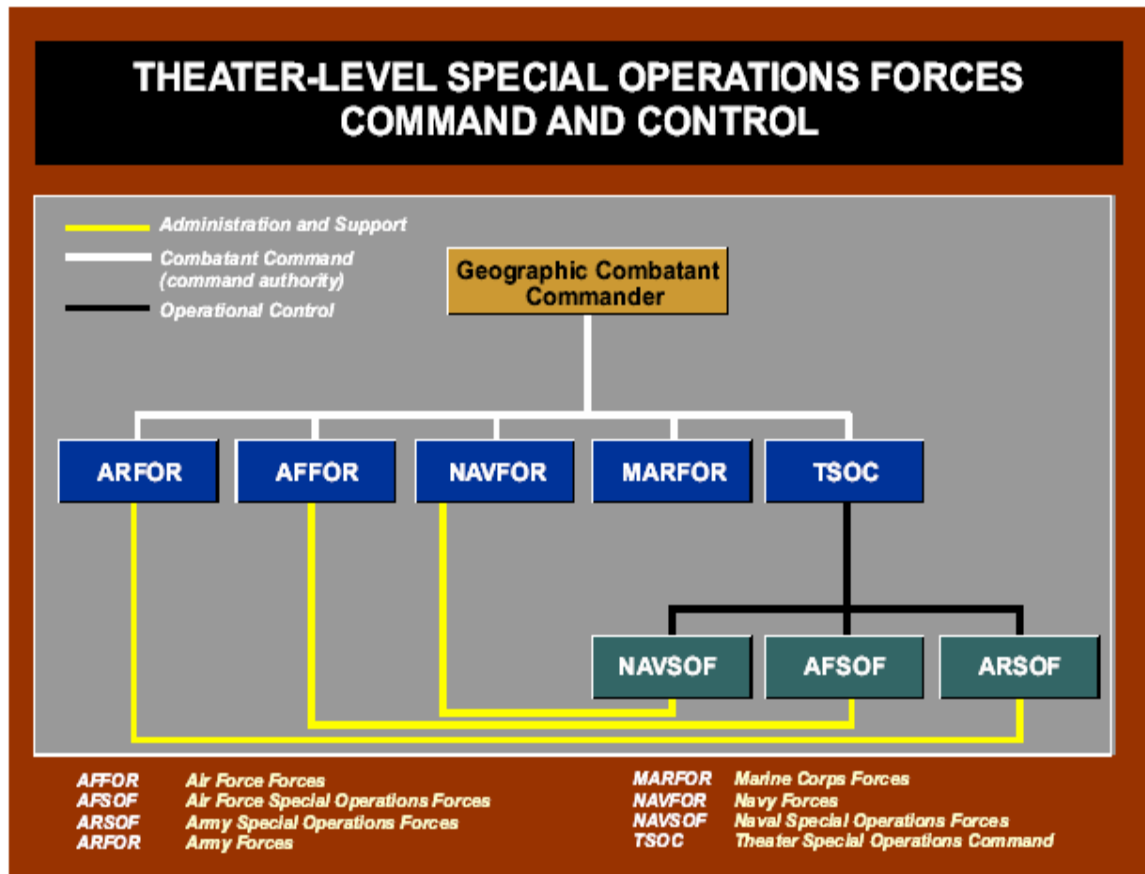


Figure 6. Theater-Level Special Operations Forces Command and Control⁹⁸

Some of the daily missions that TSOCs fulfill in support of the GCC are Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) and Integrated Survey Plans (ISPs). The ISP supports US Embassies' Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations

⁹⁷ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05 *Joint Doctrine for Special Operations*. 17 December 2003, III-4.

⁹⁸ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. 17 December 2004, III-3.

(NEO) plans. In support of the GCC's TSC, the TSOC is responsible for planning and conduct of Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET). JCETs are training activities conducted with a host nation's military or paramilitary force.⁹⁹ USNORTHCOM is no different from other commands in its requirements to accomplish these missions.

In the event of a crisis situation, the GCC is likely to direct the TSOC to establish a JSOTF to C2 the operation. Because TSOC staffs are intimately familiar with existing theater plans through training and exercises and the development of those plans, a TSOC staff can move rapidly from a cold start to a crisis response by establishing a JSOTF. If a staff other than the TSOC is used, a significant increase in risk to the operation must be accepted.¹⁰⁰

4. Theater Special Operations Command North Comparison to Attributes

a. Responsiveness

The TSOC provides the GCC an excellent organization which is capable of providing C2 for a crisis SO mission. The creation of a TSOC in support of USNORTHCOM would provide the Commander, USNORTHCOM with a highly responsive staff organization capable of deploying on short notice and establishing a C2 structure to command a SO mission anywhere in the USNORTHCOM AOR. A TSOC is established, organized, trained and equipped to react rapidly to operations and establish a JSOTF.¹⁰¹ A TSOC assigned to USNORTHCOM would nearly eliminate the issue of having to "ramp up" a staff to execute a mission.

b. Continuity of C2

Having an assigned or more appropriately, an organic TSOC within USNORTHCOM would provide the best system of establishing continuity of C2. The TSOC, because it is a component of USNORTHCOM, would develop habitual relations with the USNORTHCOM AJFHQ staff officers through the TSOC daily operations. The

⁹⁹ Department of Defense. US Special Operations Command, Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) (Unclassified). Printed from USSOCOM Classified website, March 2004, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Huslander, Sharon Thomas, Andy Willis. "Command and Control of Special Operations Forces in a JTF: Is There a Best Method?" *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Sep 2003), 25.

¹⁰¹ Mark Jones and Wes Rehorn. "Special Operations Forces...Integration in Joint Warfighting." *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Mar 2003), 7-8.

TSOC would have an understanding of the Commander's intent from the start of the mission. Joint Publication 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* states one of the duties of the TSOC is to "provide a clear and unambiguous chain of command" for SOF operating in the AOR.¹⁰² This capability allows the TSOC staff, when establishing a JSOTF, to move forward in an operation using initiative to stay inside of the enemy's decision cycle. General Hugh H. Shelton, (Commander, USSOCOM 1996-97) was quoted saying, "Finally, standing organizations exist to ensure that the full utility of SOF is realized across the continuum of military operations." General Shelton was referring to the existence of TSOCs as standing organizations supporting GCCs.¹⁰³

c. Knowledge of the AOR

In much the same fashion as the AJFHQ the TSOC would have an in-depth knowledge of the AOR. However, there would be a significant difference between a USNORTHCOM TSOC and the AJFHQ. The TSOC's understanding of the AOR would have a SO flavor to it. By conducting training and exercises in the AOR on a recurring basis, the TSOC would be able to maintain a connection to what is happening in the AOR. By conducting exercises and participating in the development of plans for USNORTHCOM, the TSOC would have a detailed knowledge of the inner workings of the command and the environment in which USNORTHCOM must work. In a *Joint Center for Lessons Bulletin*, Robert Hulsander describes one of the TSOC's inherent strengths as its "long-term, knowledgeable theater-centric orientation and well-developed relationships with allies" in the AOR.¹⁰⁴ This knowledge of the AOR, meaning everything from working with local law enforcement agencies to understanding the political sensitivities of the Mexican Military working with the US Military would help to mitigate risk in the conduct of crisis operations.

¹⁰² Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Joint Special Operations*. 17 December 2003, III-1.

¹⁰³ Robert Huslander, Sharon Thomas, Anthony Willis. "Command and Control of Special Operations Forces in a JTF: Is There a Best Method?" *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Sep 2003), 23.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Hulsander, Sharon Thomas, Anthony Willis. "Command and Control of Special Operations Forces in a JTF: Is There a Best Method?" *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No.4 (Sep 2003), 24.

d. Manpower Cost

The manpower cost of establishing a TSOC is significant. The number of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines is finite and regulated by Congress. To create a TSOC assigned to USNORTHCOM, the positions would have to be redirected from somewhere else in the military. A unique aspect of creating a TSOC is that the funding for the positions would no longer come from Major Force Program (MFP) 10.¹⁰⁵ The funding for a TSOC would come from MFP 11, which is a separate funding program that was established to ensure SO are sufficiently funded and manned. This means that the positions would have to be taken from an existing SO organization such as SOC Joint Forces Command (SOCJFCOM).

e. SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency

A TSOC assigned to USNORTHCOM would provide a unique capability to establish relationships with the Interagency. As was stated earlier, USNORTHCOM should approach its relationships with the Interagency, state and local officials in the same manner it forms relationships with foreign nations within the AOR. This approach should follow the manner of the TSC Program, which USNORTHCOM pursues with Canada and Mexico.¹⁰⁶ Following this model, SOF should be used as the lead element to establish this relationship with the Interagency.

SOF has developed a working relationship with various law enforcement agencies over the last several years. In operations in support of counter-drug efforts SOF conducted training and observation operations with and in support of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Also, in an effort to develop the FBI's capabilities to react to hostage situations SOF acted as the primary training agency for this effort, developing Interagency relationships at the tactical level. What is missing is the interaction at the strategic level between USNORTHCOM and the Interagency.

Because of these efforts, the past history of cooperation, and SOF ability to understand its operational environment, the TSOC would afford the Commander,

¹⁰⁵ Major Force Program 10 is the title used to describe the type of funding that the military receives. MFP 10 is more commonly known as Title 10 in reference to the type of forces and money it represents. USSOCOM forces fall under MFP 11.

¹⁰⁶ Bert B. Tussing and James Kievit. "DOD, NORTHCOM, and Department of Homeland Security." Collins Center Senior Symposium, Center for Strategic Leadership, US Army War College. Vol. 03-03, April 2003, 1-2.

USNORTHCOM with a tremendous asset to conduct coordinated operations, be they crisis or daily operations, with the Interagency.

5. USSOCOM Provided Joint Task Force

In order to assist USSOCOM in the task of Supported Commander for planning and execution of the War on Terror, USSOCOM has established JTFs which are deployable and capable of commanding and controlling SO for short duration missions. A key consideration by USSOCOM in developing these JTFs was that there would be no unprogrammed personnel growth required to establish the JTFs.¹⁰⁷ This means that in order to fulfill the requirements to establish these JTFs, there would be no personnel increases or changes to the Joint Manning Document (JMD) or Table of Distribution Allowances (TDA) of the units providing the personnel. In Congressional Testimony General Brown, Commander, USSOCOM stated, “We are standing up a Joint Task Force Headquarters which will allow the capability for seamless planning and execution of operations that span the spectrum of the conflict. This new structure will provide USSOCOM the flexibility to transition to a JSOTF.”¹⁰⁸

The mission of the USSOCOM JTFs is:

The USSOCOM JTFs will be trained, organized and equipped to carry out sustained SOF specific missions or prosecute special operations in support of a campaign objective as directed by the Commander, USSOCOM.¹⁰⁹

Another way of describing the USSOCOM JTF mission is to provide a C2 structure either to a GCC or reporting directly to the SecDef to conduct SO against a specific target or operation for a limited period of time. The JTFs are currently not being considered for long duration campaigns such as Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) but concepts are being discussed for their employment in support of short duration SO missions.

¹⁰⁷ Department of Defense. “Command Realignment and Joint Task Forces” Briefing (Pre-decisional Draft). US Special Operations Command (Unclassified). Printed from USSOCOM Classified Homepage, 7 November 2004, 12.

¹⁰⁸ House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities. Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony by General Bryan D. Brown, USA, Commander, US Special Operations Command. 11 March 2004. Federal Clearing House, e-Media, Inc., 4.

¹⁰⁹ Department of Defense. “Command Realignment and Joint Task Forces” Briefing (Pre-decisional Draft). US Special Operations Command (Unclassified). Printed from USSOCOM Classified Homepage, November 2004, 11.

The task organization of the JTFs will vary depending on the mission. At a minimum the JTF may consist of a liaison package only, which will provide the supported commander (GCC or JTF Commander) with SOF expertise to assist in the planning and conduct of a SO. At the other end of the spectrum, the JTF may deploy as a fully capable JTF to provide C2 for an operation. This capability will allow the organization to deploy to an Area of Operation (AO) to C2 a specific operation for a short duration.¹¹⁰ The JTF can deploy to act as an LNO package to augment a GCC for planning and operational considerations. This same organization can also be task-organized to support a Theater JTF.

Another option which requires a significantly larger force is the deployment of the organization as a JTF. This organization is fully capable of providing C2 for a SO in support of a higher JTF or the GCC. A full JTF can also operate independently to conduct an isolated SO mission in support of the War on Terror. The number of personnel supporting these types of operations ranges from 10 at the low end to over 200 in order to establish a JTF capable of C2 of an operation to support twenty-four hour operations.

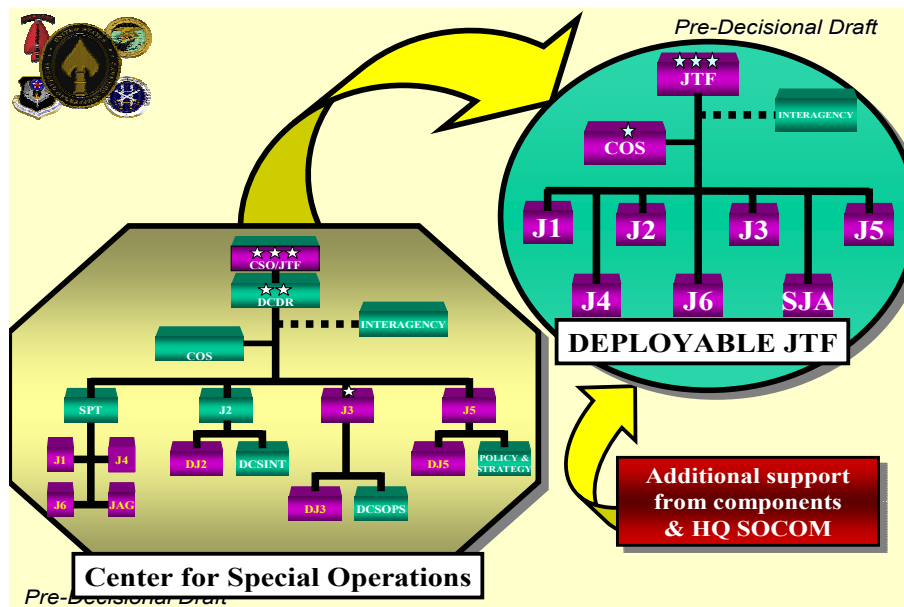


Figure 7. USSOCOM Deployable Joint Task Force¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ William Kay, Colonel, USA. Interview conducted by author, 8 November 2004.

¹¹¹ Department of Defense. "Command Realignment and Joint Task Forces" Briefing (Pre-decisional Draft). (Unclassified). US Special Operations Command. Printed from USSOCOM Classified Homepage, November 2004, 15.

Currently the JTFs are not regionally aligned or apportioned to the GCCs, nor is there intent to arrange the JTFs this way. This allows the Commander, USSOCOM more flexibility in the employment of the JTFs. Once a JTF is deployed into an operational area, its command relationship with the GCC will normally be Combatant Command (COCOM). At a minimum the command relationship between the SOCOM JTF and the commanding element, be it a Joint Force Special Operations Component Command (JFSOCC), a JSOTF or a JTF will be Tactical Control (TACON). Currently, the JTF is not rapidly deployable because its task organization and capabilities are still being developed.

USSOCOM plans on resourcing these JTFs with three options. Option one or JTF-1 will be established using US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) as the base element from which to draw personnel and equipment from. This organization provides the largest source of manpower within USSOCOM. Option two or JTF-2 will draw its base of support from US Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). The third option is JTF-SOCOM which will be formed from the staff of USSOCOM. JTFs 1 & 2 are service-specific and would require augmentation from sister service organizations to round out the JTFs.

6. Comparison of USSOCOM Joint Task Force to Attributes

a. Responsiveness

Any organization that is created from outside USNORTHCOM's daily operations will be severely hampered in its knowledge of the AOR and its ability to react quickly. Also, because a JTF from USSOCOM would be an "on-call" type of organization the time required for the JTF to become fully knowledgeable of the situation becomes a significant inhibitor to the JTF's ability to C2 the SO effectively.

Although anyone of the three JTFs could feasibly support an SO within the USNORTHCOM AOR, the ability to facilitate a collaborative planning environment between JTF-3 and USNORTHCOM has already been established in previous exercises, using existing hardware systems to communicate between the two Combatant Commands.

Because of the organization's lack of knowledge of (or focus on) the current situation and in order to better facilitate the interoperability of USSOCOM JTFs with USNORTHCOM, this author recommends that JTF-3 establish a habitual association with USNORTHCOM. This habitual association would help to reduce the time required for the USSOCOM personnel assigned to the JTF to understand the operation and the current situation. In USNORTHCOM's current staff organization of a J3 SOD, the SOF interface for a crisis situation can be easily established with JTF-3 by those two organizations.

b. Continuity of C2

With this type of organization there is no continuity of C2 between the executing unit, the JTF, and USNORTHCOM. USSOCOM JTFs are outside organizations to USNORTHCOM and thus unfamiliar with the command environment in which USNORTHCOM operates. As stated earlier, USNORTHCOM has no apportioned or assigned forces to include SOF. With this in mind, adding an additional, outside organization to a critical operation creates more opportunity for misunderstanding and increases the risk to the mission. SO requires a clear and concise chain of command. When an outside organization is brought in to C2 a mission, the probability of success is decreased because of the lack of understanding and habitual association between the command structures. As discussed above, the opportunity to mitigate this lack of continuity can be created through a habitual association of a USSOCOM JTF with USNORTHCOM.

c. Knowledge of the AOR

The main difference between a TSOC and the USSOCOM JTF is the understanding of the AOR that the TSOC develops through its daily operations. The JTF would require a steep learning curve in order to develop an understanding for the AOR in which it is operating in and will more than likely never reach the same level as a TSOC that operates in that AOR. In this type of organization the JTF will be severely hampered by its lack of understanding of the AOR.

As USNORTHCOM continues to establish its TSC with Mexico and Canada, this knowledge becomes more and more important. Knowing what capabilities the host nations possess and lack enables the USNORTHCOM staff to provide estimates

to the Commander on what might be required to support the resolution of a crisis. If one nation has a robust capability to handle a hostage rescue situation but lacks the ability to defuse a chemical or nuclear bomb, this knowledge allows the staff to be better prepared to support the incident, should it occur.

d. Manpower Cost

As stated above, one of the key planning factors of the establishment of the USSOCOM JTFs is that there can be no change to the man power and/or duty positions of the organizations providing the personnel to establish the JTFs. An organization of this nature would not require any changes to the manning of either USSOCOM or USNORTHCOM.

e. SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency

Because of the type of organization that the USSOCOM JTFs will provide, the ability to interact with the Interagency remains a key benefit to this type of organization. However, it is highly unlikely that the JTF will be manned with one hundred percent SO personnel. USSOCOM's staff organization is similar to other combatant commands in that it has a mixture of joint personnel, not necessarily with SO background.

E. SUMMARY

In the execution of its mission the likelihood of crisis response events occurring is unlikely; however, if one of these events were to occur it would be catastrophic. It is imperative that USNORTHCOM be prepared for them. In conducting SO within the USNORTHCOM AOR, the margin for error is negligible and preventable risk should be unacceptable. By creating a sound understanding of how SO missions will be commanded and controlled in the USNORTHCOM AOR, this easily preventable risk to hazardous operations will be mitigated.

The USNORTHCOM AJFHQ COA presents the most easily executable COA for the USNORTHCOM to enact, with no changes to the current organizations and a high degree of success created by a strong continuity of command and knowledge of the AOR. The ability of the AJFHQ to respond to the directions and anticipate the intent of the Commander provide this COA with a favorable condition for mitigating the inherent risk

of a SO mission. However, these favorable attributes are overshadowed by the lack of SO-trained staff officers to C2 of the SOs.

The creation of a TSOC would provide Commander, USNORTHCOM with the most flexibility for the conduct of SO within his AOR. The TSOC would provide all the advantages that the AJFHQ provides continuity of command, knowledge of the AOR and a high degree of responsiveness. A TSOC would also provide the Commander with an organization that would help to establish and lead a close working relationship with the Interagency. However, the creation of a TSOC would require significant reorganization of manpower throughout the Joint Forces and Services.

Utilization of a USSOCOM JTF provides a different means of fulfilling the requirement than has been broached before. This type of organization does not fare well in responsiveness, knowledge of the AOR, or continuity of command. But these shortcomings can be mitigated through a change to the current plan for the USSOCOM JTFs. By establishing a habitual association with USNORTHCOM, JTF-3 can mitigate or even eliminate these problems.

In the next chapter a direct comparison of the COAs to each other as they rate against each of the attributes will be presented. This comparison will be conducted in order to determine the best COA to develop to conduct C2 of SOF in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

IV. FINDINGS

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will compare and contrast each course of action (COA) to each the others as they rate against the defined attributes. In conducting this comparison each COA will be rank-ordered within that attribute and given a numerical score based on the ordering. The scores will be listed in increasing order, from best to worst compared to the attribute value of that COA. Upon completion of the scoring, the scores for each COA will be summed giving each COA a total score for comparison across all the attributes. The summed scores will be compared between each of the COA. The COA with the lowest combined score will be the recommended COA solution.

As discussed in the Methodology section, the qualitative value of the rating of each of the COAs against the attributes is based on research, professional opinion, and experience in the field of Special Operations.

B. ATTRIBUTE COMPARISON

1. Responsiveness

Being responsive to a crisis event is a critical aspect of SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR. In order for an organization to be responsive to the requirements, intent, and needs of the Commander, this C2 structure must have a basic understanding of the events surrounding the crisis. If the organization is not involved in the preliminary work-up to the crisis event, then that organization is beginning the operation from a cold start.

Since USNORTHCOM's Adaptive Joint Force Headquarters (AJFHQ) and Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North (SJFHQ-N) are an integral part of the staff, their ability to respond to crisis situations is extremely high. The SJFHQ-N provides the Commander with the flexibility to execute actions rapidly and to establish a JTF to control the operation in a short amount of time. However, the lack SOF personnel and experience in the SJFHQ-N does not support a robust SOF planning or commanding role.¹¹²

¹¹² Currently, the Joint Manning Document for the SJFHQ-N has two Government Service-13 (GS-13) SO personnel assigned.

A USNORTHCOM TSOC would provide the Commander with a force designed to deploy and react rapidly to situations throughout the AOR. A TSOC is generally organized, trained, and equipped to deploy with or without augmentation to establish a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF). This element is extremely capable of conducting and controlling the execution of SO.

Still, because a TSOC would be a sub-unified command under USNORTHCOM, some of the inherent knowledge of an operation's preliminary stages may be lost. A TSOC tends to have some separation from the Geographic Combatant Commander's staff. This separation is not serious, nor does it degrade mission execution. It does, however, provide a distinguishing difference between the responsiveness of the AJFHQ and a TSOC. Even though the TSOC Commander is the GCC's senior SOF advisor, a perception can easily develop between the two staffs that one does not need the other. This separation factor can be reduced but not eliminated. In his paper on Command and Control of National SOF, Navy Captain Sean Pybus stated that a "come as you are" event does not allow for any time to address issues of training and experience, meaning that in a crisis event there is no time to prepare for it.¹¹³ You must come to the fight as you are and execute with what you have.

US Joint Doctrine states that SOF should command SOF with a clear and concise chain of command. In the case of a TSOC, that chain of command may not be as responsive. But the disadvantages of this slower responsiveness do not outweigh the need for SOF to be part of the chain of command while conducting SO.

A USSOCOM provided JTF would provide the least responsiveness of the three COAs. Because a USSOCOM JTF is not apportioned nor habitually associated with USNORTHCOM, this type of C2 organization would require a significant amount of time to understand before beginning to execute the mission. As stated earlier, this can be mitigated by establishing a habitual association between USSOCOM JTF-3 and USNORTHCOM Staff using the Special Operations Division (SOD) and the SJFHQ as the base. Even with a training plan and habitual association, a USSOCOM JTF would

¹¹³ Sean A. Pybus. "National Special Operations Forces Command and Control: National Command Authority-Direct or via the CINC?" US Naval War College, Rhode Island, 18 May 1998, 11.

not be able to maintain the close relationship and understanding that the AJFHQ or a USNORTHCOM TSOC would have with the Commander and his staff.

2. Responsiveness Rank Order

1-USNORTHCOM AJFHQ

2-USNORTHCOM TSOC

3-USSOCOM JTF

3. Continuity of C2

A USNORTHCOM TSOC would provide the best solution to ensure that the continuity of command and control is maintained for SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR. A TSOC's ability to establish a JSOTF at its home base or forward would be a tremendous asset for the Commander, USNORTHCOM. The TSOC staff is not only a daily operational staff; it is also the staff of a deployable JSOTF located within the Command. This re-tasking of the personnel who on a daily basis monitor the situation, plan for contingencies, and deal with the SO units which will most likely be conducting the operation, provides the Commander a smooth and concise chain of command for the conduct of SO. The Joint Publication on Special Operations states that "Normally, C2 of SOF should be executed within the SOF chain of command."¹¹⁴ Not only is it likely that the relationship with the SOF executing the mission would already be established through routine contact on day to day operations, use of a TSOC in the role of a JSOTF fulfills Joint Doctrine direction of SOF commanding SOF and the use of a TSOC as a JSOTF.

The AJFHQ provides a simple chain of command for the conduct of C2 in the USNORTHCOM AOR because it runs straight to the Commander from whatever task-organized, size and mission material in a particular situation. While the AJFHQ maintains continuity within the USNORTHCOM battle staff organization, it lacks the relationships that would be established by the establishment and use of a TSOC. Little or no relationship would likely exist between the AJFHQ and the executing SO units. The AJFHQ's simplicity of organization would help to mitigate this lack of knowledge and relationship but could not eliminate it. Also, the AJFHQ would be concerned about consequence management (CM) requirements developing in the AOR more than SO,

¹¹⁴ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Joint Doctrine for Special Operations*. 17 December 2003, III-3.

generally leaving SO missions to a lower priority. CM as a whole is a much larger mission for USNORTHCOM and encompasses the majority of the AJFHQ's time and focus.

As discussed before, establishing an outside organization to provide C2 for a SO mission is a decision that accepts a significant increase in risk due to the organization's lack of knowledge of the situation and Command tendencies and personalities. A USSOCOM JTF would be that type of organization. The recommendations of habitual association or apportionment would minimize but not eliminate this risk.

4. Continuity of C2 Rank Order

1-USNORTHCOM TSOC

2-USNORTHCOM AJFHQ

3-USSOCOM JTF

5. Knowledge of the AOR

A USNORTHCOM TSOC would provide the Commander with the best element to understand the AOR. The TSOC is responsible for the conduct of the Command's Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) plan. Ownership and supervision of this plan provides the TSOC with unique insight into all the aspects of the Command's AOR. By commanding operations, both crisis and normal, on a recurring basis throughout the AOR, the TSOC will inherently develop relationships with those foreign nations in the AOR. These relationships help to establish the TSOC's in-depth knowledge of the AOR. Additionally, a TSOC is composed mostly of SO experienced personnel who have the skills and understanding of the importance of developing these relationships. Not only would a TSOC have a better understanding of foreign nations' customs and laws, it would have a better understanding of the requirements and restrictions which the military has to deal with in the conduct of military operations for domestic support. The differences between AJFHQ and a TSOC are minimal. The separation once again relates in the need to have SOF involved in the C2 of SO missions in the AOR, to include domestic crisis operations. While the requirements and restrictions on military employment in a domestic crisis event remain the same for a SO or conventional mission, there are subtle differences.

The USNORTHCOM AJFHQ maintains a high knowledge of the AOR, too. Because of the daily requirements to work in the AOR and the dealings with the various agencies and organizations, the AJFHQ has developed an understanding of the AOR and its uniqueness. However, the AJFHQ lacks the SO understanding required for conducting SO within the AOR. Although employment of US Forces in the AOR is the same in principle, the fact that SOF is being employed in the USNORTHCOM AOR is an extremely sensitive subject. The lack of knowledge and understanding of this criticality increases the risk that inherent in the operation.

A JTF established from USSOCOM will have little or no experience with operations in the USNORTHCOM AOR. This organization must be prepared to conduct operations throughout the world, and will not be able to focus efforts in any particular AOR.

6. Knowledge of the AOR Rank Order

1-USNORTHCOM TSOC

2-USNORTHCOM AJFHQ

3-USSOCOM JTF

7. Manpower Cost

The requirement for additional manning in order to create a TSOC makes USNORTHCOM TSOC an unfavorable option against this attribute. Since the military is limited in the number of personnel available and the number of joint positions is regulated by Congress, creating positions for a USNORTHCOM TSOC is difficult. Creating an additional sub-unified command for command of SO would require personnel to be moved from other commands to fulfill the requirements of the TSOC. Even if additional joint positions were approved by Congress, generating the Special Operators to fill those positions would not happen overnight. Also, the priority of effort and support for USSOCOM is the War on Terror with the main effort taking place in the Middle East and led by USCENTCOM. The probability of USSOCOM redirecting forces to something other than the War on Terror is unlikely. The manpower survey commissioned by USSOCOM to determine the SO needs and requirements of

USNORTHCOM emphasized this point by stating in its plan to conduct the survey that there must a “zero-based” manpower assessment.¹¹⁵

Because of the task organization of the remaining two COAs, each would have little or no effect on current manning. Both the USNORTHCOM AJFHQ COA and USSOCOM JTF COA use existing personnel within the staffs to create the C2 organizations. The personnel fulfilling the duties will be dual-hatted to support the C2 organizational requirements, eliminating the need to create additional positions.

8. Manpower Cost Rank Order

1-USNORTHCOM AJFHQ

1-USSOCOM JTF

3-USNORTHCOM TSOC

9. SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency

The USNORTHCOM TSOC would provide the Commander with the best organization to integrate operations with the Interagency because a TSOC is comprised mainly of SO personnel. This provides the most experience and expertise in the area of conducting combined operations with the Interagency. Generally the JMD of a TSOC is filled with SO personnel in the operations and planning areas. Also, the personnel assigned to the intelligence, personnel and logistics directorates of the TSOC have typically served at some level of SOF prior to their assignment to the TSOC. When DOD refers to its role in defense of the Homeland, defense of the borders is its priority. In the execution of this mission DOD must work closely with the Interagency.¹¹⁶

A USSOCOM JTF provides the commander with the next best opportunity to use SO personnel to assist in this integration. However, USSOCOM is similar to other unified combatant commands in the assignment of personnel. USSOCOM tends to have a significant number of personnel assigned; however, they are not all SO, nor do they necessarily have SO experience. A JTF from USSOCOM could potentially have only a few more personnel with SO than the current USNORTHCOM AJFHQ.

¹¹⁵ Department of Defense. United States Special Operations Command, Memorandum for Record, “US Northern Command Manpower Analysis Trip, 1-6 December 2002.” Tampa, Florida, 9 December 2002, 1.

¹¹⁶ Department of Defense., “Homeland Security and Special Operations: Sorting Out Procedures, Capabilities, and Operational Issues.” *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*. March 2003, 22.

The USNORTHCOM AJFHQ has the fewest SO personnel assigned. The personnel provided by the SOD are limited and dispersed throughout the Command's AJFHQ. This dispersal causes degradation to the ability of the SO personnel to provide the Commander with the influential capability of SO personnel with the Interagency.

10. SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with Interagency Rank Order

1-USNORTHCOM TSOC

2-USSOCOM JTF

3-USNORTHCOM AJFHQ

C. COURSE OF ACTION COMPARISON MATRIX

The below matrix provides a tabular representation of the COA comparisons to each other with respect to the attributes. For this thesis, a lower score is the better score.

ATTRIBUTES	USNORTHCOM AJFHQ	USNORTHCOM TSOC	USSOCOM JTF
RESPONSIVENESS	1	2	3
CONTINUITY OF C2	2	1	3
KNOWLEDGE OF AOR	2	1	3
MANPOWER COSTS	1.5	3	1.5
SOF ABILITY TO OPERATE & INTEGRATE W/ INTERAGENCY	3	1	2
TOTAL	9.5	8	12.5

Table 1. Course of Action Comparison Matrix

D. SUMMARY

The analysis and comparison of the COAs shows that the creation of a TSOC to support USNORTHCOM SO is the best solution. The analysis conducted of each of the COAs and to each other with respect to the selected attributes shows that the TSOC provides the Commander with the advantage of mitigating risk in the conduct of SO in the AOR. This chapter has completed the analysis and comparison of possible solutions to USNORTHCOM's ability to conduct Command and Control of Special Operations in its Area of Responsibility.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide answers to the research question and discuss the recommendation to Commander, USNORTHCOM for the establishment of a Theater Special Operations Command and its application. A discussion of the applications and implications of this recommendation on the War on Terror (WOT) will help to move the recommendation from academia to reality as the military serves its role in Homeland Defense. Modifications to COAs will be discussed in order to present additional options to the problem which were not discussed during the research and analysis conducted. Finally, a discussion of any further studies or analysis that may need to be considered in this area will be presented, followed by a conclusion.

The Holloway Commission provided the genesis for major changes in the way the US Military trains and fights, forcing the integration of forces. This change, and the power shift from the services to the more autonomous GCCs provided the guidance and direction for commands of the future. When the Goldwater-Nichols Act was passed the precedence was set. The responsibility for execution of missions within a geographic region belonged to that region's commander. The template that has been used in every other GCC is to establish and maintain an organic TSOC. With the unique aspects of the USNORTHCOM AOR, the need to have an organic TSOC is even more apparent. The advantage of a SO staff officer's innate desire to understand the AOR is an asset that Commander, USNORTHCOM does not currently possess, but should.

As presented earlier, JP 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* states that Command and Control of SOF should remain in a SOF chain of command under the GCC. This arrangement allows for a clear and concise chain of command affording the executing SOF the best opportunity for success.¹¹⁷ This fact should guide the Commander, USNORTHCOM to develop the definitive capability to C2 SOF within his AOR.

¹¹⁷ Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. 17 December 2003, viii.

B. VIGNETTE CONCLUSION

Commander, USNORTHCOM designates Commander, SOCNORTH as the supported commander for the operation. SOCNORTH recalls personnel and establishes a JSOTF to C2 the operation.

SO counterterrorism teams assault the ship, killing 17 of 20 terrorists and wounding 3. Once the cruise ship is declared secure, the SOF unit locates the nuclear device and begins the disarming procedure.

The JSOTF monitors the situation and provides Commander, USNORTHCOM with constant updates through SO-specific communications and procedures.

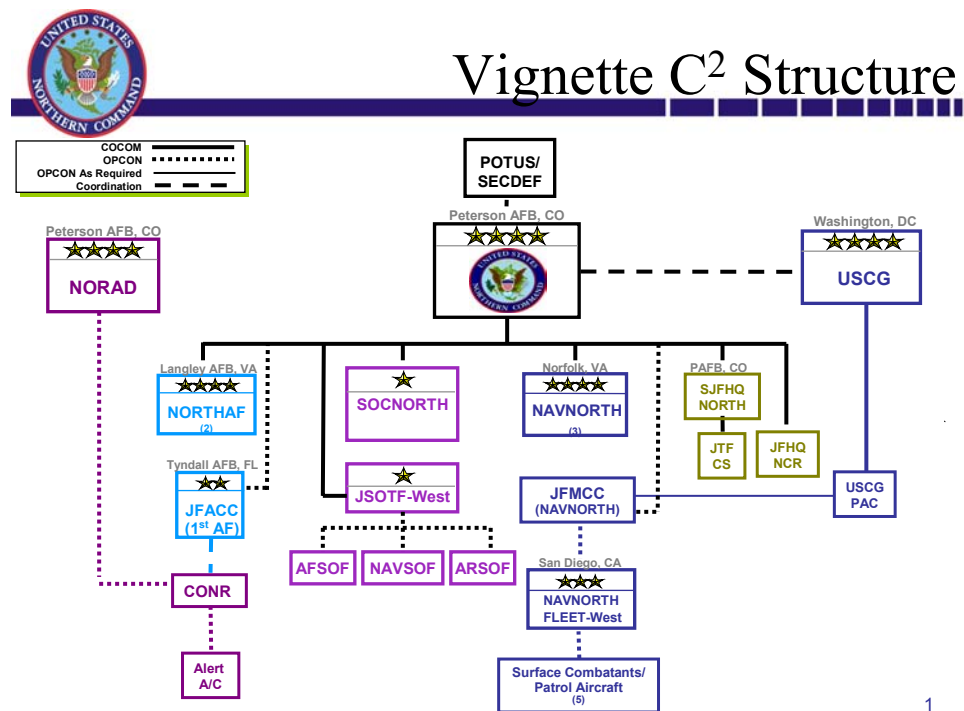


Figure 8. Vignette C2 Structure for a Maritime Special Operation Mission

C. RESEARCH QUESTION REVISITED

How can USNORTHCOM best command and control Special Operations missions in the US Northern Command Area of Responsibility?

Based on the analysis and research conducted in this thesis, the best course of action considered to answer the question is the creation and organization of a Theater Special Operations Command assigned to USNORTHCOM to command and control Special Operations in the USNORTHCOM Area of Responsibility. The *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin* describes, in an article titled "Joint Special Operations

Insights,” that creating a JSOTF from other organizations is an “ad-hoc” organization, as opposed to the use of a TSOC to create a JSOTF. This type of organization should be avoided because an ad-hoc staff organization has no standards or procedures for conducting operations. The lack of proficiency and cohesion of a staff within itself and with the commander becomes a detriment to operations.¹¹⁸ In addition, Title 10 provides additional guidance for C2 of SOF. The provision states that “unless otherwise directed by the President or Secretary of Defense, a special operation activity or mission shall be conducted under the command of the Unified Combatant Commander in whose geographic area the activity or mission is to be conducted.”¹¹⁹ To achieve the most efficient and effective means of conducting SO in the USNORTHCOM AOR a TSOC should be created to ensure the proper staff organization is available to perform the task.

The most critical factor for the creation of a TSOC for USNORTHCOM is the cost of manpower to create a new organization of this type. For example, in 1995 the figures for qualifying a SO-capable MC-130 aircrew was \$536,000 per pilot. The estimated cost of training one Special Forces Officer was \$79,000.¹²⁰ These figures only account for the training cost, and not the additional time required to produce a fully qualified SO Operator. The average time for all three services is about one year. However, that one year only provides the basic skills required and does not account for the experience necessary to become a Special Operator capable of filling staff positions. In order to create a TSOC, a significant increase in SO personnel assigned to USNORTHCOM would have to occur. (The number of personnel required to create this organization was not researched for this thesis)

Rear Admiral Joseph Maguire, US Navy, Director, Center for Force Structure, Resources and Strategic Assessments, USSOCOM, stated in the conclusion of the USSOCOM Manpower Study of USNORTHCOM SO requirements that there was no need for a TSOC organization at USNORTHCOM. He based his recommendation to

¹¹⁸ Department of Defense. “Joint Special Operations Insights, June 2002.” *Joint Center for Lessons Learned Bulletin*. March 2003, 33.

¹¹⁹ Department of Defense. US Special Operations Command. “Special Operations Forces (SOF) Reference, ‘Yellow Book.’” December 2003, 5.

¹²⁰ Government Accounting Office. “SOF: Opportunities to Preclude Overuse and Misuse.” Letter Report GAO/NSIADS-79-85, 15 May 1997, 4.

Commander, USSOCOM on the lack of apportioned SOF on a continuous basis and the underdetermined requirement for C2 of SOF in a contingency situation in the USNORTHCOM AOR.

All other aspects of having a TSOC supporting USNORTHCOM indicate an obvious advantage. Continuity of C2, for instance, with a TSOC provides a strong command relationship between the GCC and the executing SOF. The relations that are developed through training events, exercises and the shared responsibility for the development of SO-related CONPLANS helps to foster this continuity. Not only are TSOCs established in every other GCC, currently US Joint Forces Command has a Special Operations Command which has no geographic responsibilities. Two other key attributes supporting the recommendation are Knowledge of the AOR and SOF Ability to Operate and Integrate with the Interagency. These two attributes complement each other for a TSOC. Because the majority of personnel assigned to a TSOC are SO, both these attributes reinforce the need for a TSOC. SO personnel, to include staff officers, are more adept at developing an in-depth understanding of their AOR because of their SO training. In the development of this understanding, SO Staff Officers have the tendency to develop an understanding and relationship with the Interagency. Again, SOF fosters a strong understanding of how the military can integrate, complement and rely on the Interagency in the conduct of SO.

D. POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

In the conduct of the research for this thesis alternatives or changes to the COAs were mentioned briefly in Chapters III and IV. One of the most influential changes that could occur to any of the COAs is to the USSOCOM JTF COA. This COA scored poorly on several of the attributes because of its isolation from USNORTHCOM staff processes and procedures. Mitigation of this separation could occur fairly easily by, at a minimum, establishing a habitual relationship between one of the JTFs and USNORTHCOM. Ideally, USSOCOM JTF-3 would be apportioned to USNORTHCOM for planning. This apportionment would insure that USNORTHCOM had priority of support from that JTF, and prevent the JTF from losing focus on USNORTHCOM operations. The apportionment of the JTF would also help to develop the habitual working relationship that is required to ensure a smooth transition from normal operations to contingency or

crisis operations. The Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security states that the Commander, USSOCOM is to serve as the supported commander for counterterrorism missions and acts as the supporting commander to USNORTHCOM and USPACOM for operations requiring SOF.¹²¹

E. FURTHER STUDIES REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED

Two subject areas that are sequels of this thesis require further analysis and study. First, if USNORTHCOM is to establish a TSOC to execute C2 of SOF in the AOR, then what should be the make-up or task organization of the TSOC. Each TSOC has a different task organization based on the missions of that GCC. Because of this, there is no “cookie cutter” approach for the establishment of a TSOC. In order to ensure that the task organization fits the mission, a study must be made of the SO mission requirements for USNORTHCOM. Second, if USSOCOM is going to provide a JTF to C2 SOF for USNORTHCOM, what should the relationship be? What capabilities should that organization possess in order to best support Commander, USNORTHCOM’s mission of defending the Homeland?

Because this thesis is unclassified, several SO missions were not discussed in detail, or at all. In order to develop a more accurate picture of the requirements of USNORTHCOM to conduct SO, a classified manpower study should be conducted. The SO classified missions are known to the author and their possible impacts were considered in the preparation of the thesis; however, they cannot be discussed in this forum.

F. EFFECT ON WAR ON TERROR

The creation of a TSOC for USNORTHCOM would provide the Commander with an organization trained to conduct counterterrorism. A TSOC would also provide the Commander with a staff element able to conduct the specialized planning and execution of counterterrorism operations. This would give the Commander a staff organization with close ties to USSOCOM, the DOD lead in the WOT, which would ensure the command’s efforts to defeat terrorism remain a priority. Major Mark Davis, USA, explained in his paper, “Operation ANACONDA: Command and Confusion in

¹²¹ Department of Defense. *Joint Doctrine for Homeland Security* (Final Coordinating Draft), 26 March 2004, II-11-II-12.

Joint Warfare,” that the WOT is such a dynamic operational environment that an effective, well-organized command structure must exist in order to support successful operations.¹²²

On the other hand, the creation of a TSOC could be perceived as a detriment to the WOT. Moving more SO-trained personnel to support Homeland Defense would take them away from the front lines in the WOT. The main objective of the WOT is to defeat the terrorist prior to the threat being truly realized or materialized in the Homeland. The best means of doing this is by defeating the terrorists in their perceived safe-havens, not waiting until they are in the act of attacking the Homeland. In a workshop on Homeland Security and Special Operations, attended by senior military personnel, one of the stated comments was that “the optimum use of SOF warriors is not at home in CONUS (Continental United States), where the American public might have a severe reservation about their employment in-country, but overseas, to go after the terrorists where they live.”¹²³

11 September 2001 elevated an issue which the military has always trained for but never thought of on such a scale since World War II: rear area security. Currently, DOD provides ongoing support to this through Operation NOBLE EAGLE (ONE).¹²⁴ But the full responsibility to defend the Homeland must be considered and prepared for. If the threat is mainly an asymmetric threat, then the best possible force to counter that threat is an organization trained to fight and defeat an asymmetric threat, Special Operations Forces. To fully prepare USNORTHCOM to fight the War on Terror, a TSOC should be created to provide Commander, USNORTHCOM this capability.

G. CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown the importance of the establishment of an organization to Command and Control Special Operation Forces in the US Northern Command Area of Responsibility by providing a discussion of the current and future threat to the Homeland

¹²² Mark G. Davis, MAJ, USA. “Operation ANACONDA: Command and Confusion in Joint Warfare.” School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. June 2004, 4.

¹²³ Department of Defense. “Homeland Security and Special Operations: Sorting Out Procedures, Capabilities, and Operational Issues.” Joint Center for Lessons Learned, March 2003, 27.

¹²⁴ Department of Defense. “Homeland Security and Special Operations: Sorting Out Procedures, Capabilities, and Operational Issues.” Joint Center for Lessons Learned, March 2003, 24.

and how USNORTHCOM must counter that threat. The thesis has also presented historical evidence of the significance of SOF and the importance of SOF commanding SOF. Currently, the organization USNORTHCOM uses to C2 SOF in the AOR is a mix, depending on the operation. This varying of C2 structures for SOF is not conducive to the success of SO, be they operations, such as Theater Security Cooperation, contingency or even crisis operations.

The measuring stick for the recommendation by the 2002 USSOCOM Manpower Study was a zero-balance change in force structure and the requirement to have forces apportioned for operations, then why does US Joint Forces Command maintain a Special Operations Command for training and no forces apportioned to it? The critical aspect of a crisis mission developing in the USNORTHCOM AOR is too important to the safety and security of the US population for USNORTHCOM not to be prepared to conduct an operation of this nature in its AOR. As stated before, the likelihood of another attack in the US has been reduced but what would be the testimony before Congress if another attack occurs and the opportunity to prevent it was missed because of a misunderstanding of mission intent between the executing SOF and a staff which did not understand the capability of SOF in a mission and could not convey the Commander's guidance and intent to that unit? What staff organization is going to provide the theater plan of execution for the WOT? Or a crisis event?

In order to provide SOF the greatest opportunity for success, the Commander, USNORTHCOM should request the Secretary of Defense to authorize the establishment of a Theater Special Operations Command for USNORTHCOM, Special Operations Command North (SOCNORTH).

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